



Reebok Stadium

The story of the Reebok Stadium. A year in the life of Bolton Wanderers Football Club

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Reebok Stadium

Best wishes
to Andrew,
Wrexham

Gordon Hargreaves,
Chairman, Bolton Wanderers Football Club



The story of the Reebok Stadium - Foreword

Gordon Hargreaves
Chairman BWFC



Bolton's President Nat Lofthouse OBE,
Chairman, Gordon Hargreaves and the then Mayor
of Bolton, Councillor Alan Rushton start the digging
at the Middlebrook site, in November 1995.

At 1.30 pm on Saturday January 10th 1998 Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott unveiled a plaque to officially open The Reebok Stadium. It was the final action in an eleven year journey which has taken Bolton Wanderers out of its traditional Burnden Park home and into the most modern, up-to-date and expensive new stadium in Britain. During those eleven years the whole face of the football club has changed beyond recognition. In 1987 we were starting our first ever season in the fourth division of the Football League. It was the culmination of seven years of declining fortune but Robbie Savage's goal 22 minutes from the end of our final game of the season at Wrexham ensured it was a one season experience and one we hope never to see repeated. Today, just short of eleven years later, the club finds itself up among the elite of English soccer in the best League in the world, playing in the finest new stadium in the country and with a stock market listing. The need for us to make the journey to The Reebok Stadium seems apparent when, following the final report of Lord Justice Taylor, independent surveys confirmed that it was not possible to continue at Burnden Park on a satisfactory operational basis. To achieve our aims for the club and its supporters we had to have a new home. Following up on professional advice we came to the conclusion that the 200 acre site at Lostock was the only feasible location out of 14 sites which were examined.

Work on the stadium eventually got underway in November of 1995 when the first turf was cut by the then Mayor of Bolton, Councillor Alan Rushton and Wanderers' President Nat Lofthouse OBE.

Since that day we have suffered heartbreak and triumph both on and off the pitch, but by teamwork and co-operation between all parties involved during those eleven years, we have made a successful transition. It has been a massive project. I would imagine most of us have experienced a domestic house move and all the upheaval that entails. Multiply that a thousand-fold and you begin to get some idea of the scale of the move from Burnden to the Reebok. But the substantial benefits to the local community far outweighed the headaches. Over 3,000 new jobs have been created at the Middlebrook Development, adjoining the Reebok Stadium. Similarly, our stadium and proposed associated leisure and sports facilities, which will be completed around the turn of the century will provide many more new employment opportunities, as well as the very best for spectators and participants alike.

The public road network around the stadium site has been improved out of all recognition.

Within the pages of this book is contained the story of how a vision was turned into a reality. It is also the story of how sport, business and government can work together in harmony for the benefit of the community as a whole.

I hope you enjoy reading it.

Gordon Hargreaves, Chairman, BWFC

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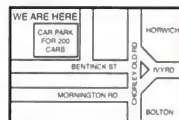
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Foreward - Gordon Hargreaves, Chairman BWFC	Page 1
Leaving Burnden Park, The Challenge - Graham Ball, Director, BWFC	Page 5
The Pitch - 1995 - Richard Norton, Groundsman BWFC	Page 6
Last Match at Burnden Park - Des McBain, Chief Exec, BWFC	Page 9
The Past and the Future - Nat Lofthouse OBE, President, BWFC	Page 11
● September 1996	Page 12
Bolton Wanderers F.C. - Simon Marland, Finance Manager, BWFC	Page 15
Bolton Metropolitan Council - Des Grogan, Secretarial Services	Page 17
Orbit Developments - Simon Wilson, Director Orbit	Page 18
The End of an Era - Paul Fletcher, Chief Exec. Reebok Stadium	Page 23
● October 1996	Page 24
Visits to other Stadiums - Des McBain, Chief Exec. BWFC	Page 27
Birse Construction - Andy Hurst, Project Commercial Manager Birse	Page 31
The Floodlights - Phil Hampson, Resident Engineer BWFC	Page 33
● November 1996	Page 36
The Reebok Story - David Singleton, Vice President, Reebok UK	Page 39
Graphic Design - Mike Trevena, Atom Associates	Page 43
Press Facilities - Alan Fullelove, Press & PR Officer BWFC	Page 45
The Visitors Centre - Tom Hall, Visitor Centre Manager	Page 47
● December 1996	Page 48
The Manager's View - Colin Todd, Manager, BWFC	Page 53
● January 1997	Page 60
Watsons Steel - David Oswin, Project Manager, Watsons	Page 63
Matchday Sponsorship - Terry Holland, Commercial Manager, BWFC	Page 65
Matchday Clubs - Nigel Ball, Marketing Manager, BWFC	Page 69
The Middlebrook Exhibition Centre - Nigel Ball, Marketing Manager	Page 71
● February 1997	Page 72
Designed for Life - Andrew Hobson, Design Consultant, BWFC	Page 75
The Dressing Rooms - Andrew Hobson, Design Consultant, BWFC	Page 77
The Ticket Office - Graham Holliday, Ticket Office Manager, BWFC	Page 79

Stadium Design - Rod Sheard, Lobb Sports Architecture	Page 83
● March 1997	Page 88
The Reebok Name - Paul Fletcher, Chief Exec, Reebok Stadium	Page 93
Concept to Reality - Jan Kozlowski, Project Manager, Reebok Stadium	Page 95
Benefiting our Community - Councillor Frank White J.P.	Page 97
Public Transport - John Walsh, O.B.E - Transport Consultant	Page 99
● April 1997	Page 100
Better By Far - Paul Fletcher, Chief Exec, Reebok Stadium	Page 103
Disabled Facilities - Liam O'Connor, Supporter BWFC	Page 107
Plan - Ground Floor Level - Lobb Sports Architecture	Page 109
Plan - Level Two - Lobb Sports Architecture	Page 111
● May 1997	Page 112
Conference & Banqueting - Gary Atkinson, Manager Ring & Brymer	Page 117
Interior Design - Charles Batchelor, Sucha Design	Page 119
Stadium Safety - Colin Sumner, Safety Officer, BWFC	Page 121
● June 1997	Page 124
1st Goal at the Reebok Stadium - Kind permission of B.E.N.	Page 127
A Photographer Fan - Brian White, BWFC Supporter	Page 129
Executive Boxes - Nigel Ball, Marketing Manager	Page 133
The Rail Halt - John Walsh, O.B.E, Transport Consultant	Page 135
● July 1997	Page 136
The Players Lounge - Alan Fullelove, PR Officer, BWFC	Page 141
Did You Know? - Phil Hampson, Resident Engineer	Page 143
BWFC Merchandising at the Reebok - Chris Ball, Shop Manager	Page 145
● August 1997	Page 146
Kick off at the Reebok - Gordon Sharrock, Bolton Evening News	Page 149
Rock at the Reebok - Paul Fletcher, Chief Exec, Reebok Stadium	Page 153
Wanderers T.V. - Peter Myers, Touchline T.V.	Page 155
Tours at the Reebok - Tom Hall, Visitors Centre Manager	Page 157
Credits and BWFC Information	Page IBC

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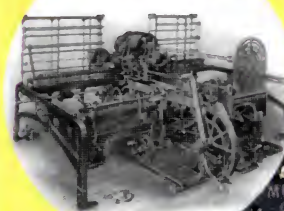
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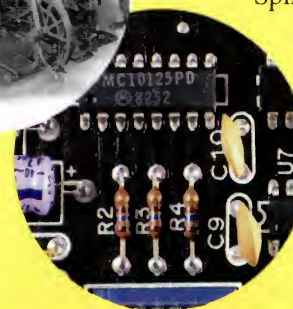
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The Challenge, Leaving Burnden Park

Graham Ball, F.R.I.C.S.
Project Director BWFC



Bolton Wanderers Football Club has been an important part of the local community for over 100 years, and the history and achievements of the Football Club have been acknowledged nationally, during this period whilst the Wanderers played at Burnden Park, Bolton. Unfortunately, time would not stand still for the Club nor the local community and, in reality, Burnden Park was decaying whilst unfortunately at the same time, a large proportion of the Club's fans were becoming part of the local unemployment situation.

Although discussions regarding relocation took place as early as 1986, more serious discussions began in the early 1990's. The Football Club and Bolton Council decided to try and harness the power of both bodies to improve the overall local situation. The Club was anxious to rebuild the decaying stadium by way of providing a facility for their fans that could be the best in Europe for its size. Large tracts of industrial land that had been available and unused for generations, started to look very promising.

The requirements of the Council were for a stadium that was an architectural statement, and also incorporated extensive community facilities and benefits on non-football occasions. The requirements of the Football Club were for a stadium that offered new horizons in

spectator safety and comforts, but which would equally serve the community for the other 340 days per year, to subsidise in part the costs of the stadium but, additionally, for the stadium to be the centre of community sporting opportunities which would be created in the adjoining and surrounding areas.

The continuing endeavours of the Football Club and the Council, along with the Partner chosen by the Council to develop the non-football/sports areas, have resulted in the attractive development, known as Middlebrook, Horwich, Bolton. Middlebrook occupies some 200 acres, adjoining the former run-down areas, and convenient for the nearby motorway system. Infrastructure for the site has been completed, at a cost of some £14m, which includes improvements to Junction 6/M61 motorway, and six other local off-site road junctions, as well as starter industrial units for employment and landscaping proposals.

In supporting the Middlebrook Project, the Football Club has taken the lead in the creation of a pedestrian footbridge, over a busy access road, and is obtaining anticipated assistance from football sources towards the construction of a new Rail Halt on the adjoining main line.

An indoor/outdoor Tennis Centre, to be run on a community basis as opposed to membership usage, is to be constructed, along with a full size running track and quality football pitch for the Council's schoolboy town team, etc. Further planned intentions are for a full Football and Sports Academy on adjoining lands, extending to over 100 acres of greenfield facilities on a regional user basis.

Importantly, during the official opening ceremony of the Reebok Stadium (10th January 1998) it was announced that 2,850 new jobs had already been created at Middlebrook and forecast that overall 4,000 new jobs should be created by the year 2000.

The Stadium

The Club decided to maximise spectator comfort and community benefits, concentrating on quality rather than quantity of spectator seats. Many other stadia were studied, both in the UK and in Europe, in order to seek out the best in design for the new Stadium, which would

meet the latest FIFA and UEFA requirements. Over 2,750 car parking spaces have been incorporated with the design, suitably segregated between home and visiting supporters.

Wider than normal terrace units give unrivalled comfort and leg room for 25,000 spectators, accommodated in the lower and upper tiers. The sweeping curves of the upper tier means no one is ever seated more than 90 metres from the centre of the field. Each of the 8 spectator concourses has two concession units selling a variety of foods, all able to be consumed in view of one of the play-back TV screens in operation all around the Stadium. Spectator comfort, multi-usage, and quality of finishes are the key to the Stadium's success.

Arriving at the Stadium, a double height Reception Foyer gives the instant feel of a Five Star Hotel. Two lifts, finished in polished walnut, take guests up to the first, second and third floors, where various corporate executive areas cater for up to 2,050 people on match days. The design and finishes within all the various corporate facilities are like no other stadium, certainly in Europe, and most probably the world. The Stadium boasts 46 executive box suites, available on non-match days for business use. Two function suites, one holding 400 and the other holding 600, give Bolton one of the North West's premier business conference facilities.

Community commitments are further provided by an Exhibition Hall, some 35,000 sq. ft. in size, in the main East Stand structure. This Hall can be used for exhibitions, concerts, conferences and banquets, and doubles up as a community sports hall.

Perfection does not come cheaply, but the overall cost of £35m. (£1,250 per seat approx.) offers good value to the fans and the community for the next 100 years.

Burnden Park has served us all well. It will remain a golden memory for myself and many thousands of people in Bolton and throughout the country. Sadly it could not keep up with the club's ambitions. Burnden Park will remain forever linked with Bolton Wanderers' rich history, but the Reebok will allow us to take part in a new century of football in magnificent surroundings.

B.W.F.C has been an important part of the local community for over 100 years

The Pitch -

Richard Norton,
Groundsman, BWFC



Levelling work under progress.



The £400,000 investment in underground heating has already disappeared from view.

The modern football stadium with its high stands and enclosed space presents an alien environment for the cultivation and management of the humble grass plant. Today's football pitch is no longer a bit of green turf in summer and brown mud in winter, the demands of the game and TV coverage have led to a comprehensive re-evaluation of surface quality and consequently construction methods and subsequent management techniques.

Bolton Wanderers recognised at an early stage that the playing surface for the new Stadium would be a vital component in the development. Some of the best brains in modern sports turf culture were consulted during the design period. Pitch design was led by Professional Sportsturf Design (PSD) and complemented by J. Mallinson (Ormskirk) Ltd, the Sportsground contractors and the Sportsturf Research Institute (STRI).

- Laser installed levels.
- Engineered Sand, Soil rootzone growing medium, of uniform composition
- Automatic sprinkler system - vital to ensure maximum growth potential during the important summer months.
- Uniform substructure incorporating piped drainage system
- Hot water undersoil heating system
- Latest grass cultivars including Barcampesia a tufted hair-grass with improved tolerance of shade conditions.
- Rootzone stabilisation with the incorporation of 'polythene' filaments (via fibresand) into the upper rootzone element.



Blake makes the most of the new surface.
Photograph Bolton Evening News.

Hot water irrigation system

The Reebok pitch embraces these modern methods, in effect the playing surface is a combination of soil science, engineering, botany, horticulture and groundmanship. Good turfgrass is influenced by two major factors - climate and soil, the latter can be controlled via construction and groundmanship, but unfortunately, the British climate is not so easily restrained.

Bolton's new pitch comprises the following features, which are typical in today's constructions.

After the official sod cutting ceremony in November, 1995 the initial enablement works contract started in earnest in January, 1996. Following this, the Pitch Contractor J. Mallinson (Ormskirk) Ltd established his construction team on site in February and commenced operations by installing the drainage system.

Work continued on a steady basis apart from a couple of difficulties with adverse weather and problems with sourcing the temporary water and power supplies for the irrigation system. It now seems a long time ago that the pitch took shape in the midst of rough marshy ground at the end of Green Pine Road in Horwich.

Sowing down took place on schedule at the end of May, 1996 rapidly followed by the erection of a perimeter fence to keep out unwanted guests. Although on a couple of occasions some more determined visitors were able to scale the fence and leave initials of competitor clubs as evidence of their visit.

Establishment of the new grass was steady rather than spectacular and continued as the magnificent new Stadium was constructed around the outside.

Odd headaches arose from time to time because of fungal disease (young grass is particularly susceptible to attack) which could not be treated immediately because of access restraints caused by huge cranes erecting the structural steelwork and the like.



Early groundwork in Winter 1995.

In the weeks running up to the first game, myself and the football club became actively involved in the day to day regime. Work was then concentrated on finalising the permanent irrigation set up, maximising the grass growth and root development, repairing incursions from the Stadium builders and installing the goalposts. The pitch has now been used for a number of games and training sessions and received favourable comments from the playing staff. The intention was to build a firm, smooth and fast playing surface and to date the performance seems to match the intention.

The only cloud on the horizon remains the inevitable winter shade pattern at the pitch surface, which as expected does affect the southern end of the ground. However, work will continue with experimentation using different grass cultivars and hopefully we will one day develop a grass plant that will tolerate having its head kicked off in the dark.



The first step on a £35 million journey.

A temporary fence around the pitch.

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Des McBain Chief Executive, BWFC The Last Match at Burnden Park . . .



John McGinlay scores the very last goal at Burnden park.



Today, however, was not quite like any other match. It was unique. Many, many hours had been spent with the Local Authority and the Police discussing the final match in an attempt to ensure that everything went smoothly and that there were no problems or injuries. Only time would tell.

The Board of Directors had discussed in detail how to commemorate the closure. It was originally to be extremely low key as it was a concern for Colin Todd that the players may be distracted by the occasion from the prime target of promotion. As the day had drawn nearer, the Club had reached its first goal of promotion and finally the Championship.

The celebrations and reflections could now take place with no inhibitions. 10 am and SKY TV technicians were by now in full swing preparing for the live screening of this historic event.

The Administration Department and Ticket Office were still having to disappoint hundreds of supporters wishing to attend the game and not able to obtain tickets.

By lunch time match day staff were arriving some five hours before necessary in order to soak up the atmosphere for the last time.

4 pm and the first invited guests of the Club were assembling at two hotels in the town to partake of a pre match buffet before attending the game. There had been no way that the facilities at Burnden Park could have been improved without major financial outlay and certainly not for the number of ex-players and guests who wished to pay their respects to a fine "Old Lady".

6 pm and at last the turnstiles were open and supporters were able to either meet with the friends they had stood or sat next to for so many years or greet the players as they approached the players entrance for the last time. By 7 pm the Guests had arrived at the ground and the ex-Players of the past were ready to parade around the pitch led by the Club President, Nat Lofthouse.

The Stadium was buzzing by 7.30 pm with virtually everyone inside soaking up the unique atmosphere.

The Referee blew his whistle for kick off and the final match was under way. Although not yet able to relax, attention was now focused on the game. Charlton scored the first goal. Were they going to spoil the occasion. No way. A final result of Bolton Wanderers 4, Charlton Athletic 1, ensured that Burnden Park would go out with a bang. A fairy tale ending also for John McGinlay who scored the last ever goal at Burnden Park.



A lap of honour following a 4-1 victory. Photographs Bolton Evening News.

Immediately after the match the centre spot was ceremoniously removed by the Chairman followed by unforgettable scenes from an emotional 22,000 crowd who were allowed to stay as long as they wished to pay their last respects.

The referee's whistle and linesmen's flags were presented to the club after the match for the club's museum.

With the SKY TV technicians removing their cabling it looked as though the demolition of the famous old stadium had already begun.

11.30 pm and it was now time for the staff and services to stand down on this special night. A few tears were mixed in with the waste paper on the terraces.

One last look back down the tunnel as the floodlights were extinguished for the last time.

It was the end of a special era.

The rest is HISTORY.



Fans on the terraces for the very last time at Burnden Park.

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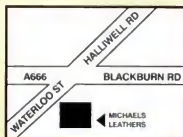
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Reebok Stadium

The Past and the Future

**Nat Lofthouse O.B.E.
President BWFC**

It seems like only yesterday I walked into Burnden Park for the very first time as a keen young would-be professional footballer hoping to make the grade.

I did not know then that I would go on to make 503 appearances; score 285 goals; win 33 England International caps scoring 30 goals; and, become an O.B.E. Doesn't time pass quickly?

It was 1939 when I first fell in love with Bolton Wanderers and I was 14 years old. I have been employed by Bolton Wanderers Football Club for nearly 60 years and loved every minute. But I never thought, in those early days we would ever leave Burnden Park especially the day I made my debut as a young 15 year old.



Nat Lofthouse scores another goal for the "Trotters" in the 1958 F.A. cup.

Major changes started to come into the game starting in the early 1970's. When I first began my career the manager was also the secretary and rarely came onto the training fields even though he picked the team every week. It was someone else's job to get the players fit. The 1970's saw the profile of the football manager change from backroom staff to star status. Today's football sees the managers often more valuable than the players!

The 1970's saw another major change quietly come into football. The ball itself. The modern plastic coated ball would stay the same consistently throughout the game irrespective of the weather. This benefit would have saved me many headaches in the 1940's and 1950's when a mistimed header, at 4.35pm in mid November, with the lace coming undone, could cause stars, bells and a thumping headache all weekend.

The new ball has quickened up the game and brought in more entertainment. I think it was in the 1950's when I saw the Brazilian's curve the ball around a defensive wall. They did not have our winters to contend with. Now our British players can match the continentals at most of the ball dribbling and shooting skills.

The second major noticeable change has arrived in the last decade, the pitch.

It was unbelievable to see the pitch being laid for the new Reebok Stadium in 1995, twelve months before they began to build the Stadium! I would pop up each week to watch lorryloads of gravel, stone and sand being laid and kept wondering when the soil and grass seed would arrive. Wrong again. The new pitches are laid on 70% sand with only a small amount of soil. I am told that this allows the water to drain through very easily. I wish they had known that at the Baseball Ground, Derby in the 1960's, I am sure my goal tally would have been much higher.

When I first heard the news that we would be leaving Burnden Park, I must admit I was against the idea. But as I sat and thought about the changes I had seen in my time I slowly realised it would be the best option for Bolton Wanderers in the long run.



Nat receives football's greatest trophy, F.A. cup 1958.

The Premier League has proved a great success and it is the only place for Bolton Wanderers. We could not have achieved a regular place in the Premier League at Burnden Park because now we need to compete with other teams with our off the field activities as well as try to win games on the field.

At the new Reebok we have many hundreds of visitors looking around the place, many on guided tours and I am always pleased to pop out of my office to say hello when I can. The most popular question is 'How would I like to be playing in today's football' my answer is always the same 'definitely not'. I had a wonderful time during my career in the greatest era, in the greatest team, in the greatest town. It is now someone else's turn, and my turn to sit and watch.

The fact that I can watch my hometown Club in a beautifully cushioned seat in one of the finest Stadiums in the world makes me very proud. The past has been great, who's to say the future will not be even better.

Nat Lofthouse O.B.E.



Nat Lofthouse



September

Groundwork

For those of us at Birse Construction who were fortunate enough to be selected to work on the Reebok Stadium few could have realised the size and the magnitude of the task ahead. Of course the staff knew it would not be the same as any other project that they had known but their achievements come 1st September 1997 were to be acknowledged by thousands of Wanderers fans.

For in the twelve months prior to that momentous occasion, there was another team playing at the Reebok Stadium. That team was the construction team, which assembled like an elite premiership force, combined the subtle nuances of its own midfield tacticians, fluent silky skills of its wing players, the driving force at its helm and ultimately the dynamic ability and innovation to produce the goods when it counted. On its day this team of 35 assembled from all corners of the northwest and beyond, could be held in the same esteem as its famous predecessors at the Coliseum of Rome.

The effect of working on such a project could be measured in terms of experience and curriculum vitae, however in being part of history in the making we all know what we have gained.

Damien James Quantity Surveyor working for Birse Construction provides a month-by-month account from the building contractor's view point. His recollections begin in September 96.

Introduction

Damien James, BSc(Hons), ARICS, Quantity Surveyor, Birse Construction.



Early piling work begins.

The new season was already underway and with it Bolton Wanderers march to a triumphant First Division Championship. Burnden Park continued to house its faithful supporters during its Nationwide challenge. The last season for this famous football ground would not be forgotten by its replacement with the new Stadium at Horwich.

On site progress was good, although hindered by the incessant raincloud that had descended and remained stationary over Middlebrook. This stage of the construction concentrated on the formation of concrete bases on which to place the huge steel frame that was currently being fabricated by Watsons. For those who regard construction as being a source of adventure, it is this stage in the project that makes you grateful that the labourers and tradesmen do get the opportunity in the summer to enjoy some good weather.

The conditions on site had not reached the low that they were to, but the status of the existing ground was deteriorating under the continuity of the rainfall.

It was essential to maintain progress in line with our commitments and every effort was being made at this stage so as not to jeopardise our obligations.

In a television interview, Bruce Rioch paid tribute to his former Board and extended the praise of them being the best board he had ever worked with. In a day and age where football could be measured in terms of economic growth and personal prosperity, compliments like these are few and far between when ex managers talk about their former employers.

Having aspired to gaining a little bit of inside knowledge and with it an understanding that football can still evolve from its grass roots, I can understand the significance of Bruce Rioch's statement. Many advocate that the construction industry houses an adversarial approach which ultimately leads to confrontation between the parties. For some and probably quite considerable in number (if you were to consider the money that the legal profession earns from construction industry disputes) the prospect of confrontation and egotistical exposure holds the key to their involvement in the construction industry. We as a construction team would never deny that our twelve months saw us engage in some unsavoury incidents on the field of play, which like the footballing analogy that I am drawing were no more than signs of petulance and an opportunity to flex muscles.

All things considered, the key relationship on the project was that between Birse Construction and Bolton Wanderers Football Club, suffice to say, if there was anyone who doubted the credence of Bruce Rioch's words, I can find at least 35 people who will be willing to make you reconsider. The involvement in such a project was enhanced by the willingness to openly engage in the activities of the construction team. The Bolton Wanderers team provided the touchline support that every team on the pitch requires to be a success.

The achievement of constructing the Stadium in the allotted time span cannot be treated lightly, in an industry where most projects are judged by time, cost and quality, for one of the magnitude of The Reebok Stadium to achieve all three in fourteen months underlines the success of the construction team.



All construction photographs by kind permission of Chris Tofalos.

Sure we weren't supposed to be on the pitch but neither were the other twenty or so who were re-enacting a goalmouth incident.

In May 1996 the pitch had already been laid and was enclosed with palisade fencing. My first visit to the Stadium was with my dog late on a Tuesday evening that month and my intention was to photograph and encapsulate the current status of the then to be construction site. I think I managed to take two photographs before being asked by fully kitted Wanderers fans to take their picture in what they were guessing to be, the centre circle. Sure we weren't supposed to be on the pitch but neither were the other twenty or so who were re-enacting a goalmouth incident.

In June 1996 as the machines rolled onto the greenfield area of the site, the visits continued, some monthly, some weekly, but most daily. Of all the photographs published on the stadium I would wager that there are a few collectors items on the mantelpieces of Bolton.

In those early months as the site was brought to formation, many visitors queried the necessity for a stream to run through the West Stand concourse, their return visits saw the stream move further and further out of the stadium, and with it more and more of the surrounding embankment.

The summer months of July and August are notoriously good in the construction industry. The sun is out, well sometimes, (there was a point when it felt like it had rained solidly on Middlebrook), the days are long, and everyone gets a tan, (well not those of us who are stuck inside a tin hut with the sun beating down and not enough petty cash to buy a fan).

Thankfully, Horwich has The Bromilow, which provided the welcome reward at the end of many an arduous day. Unfortunately my own business acumen had taken a holiday at this point, for if I could have bought shares in this pub in July 1996, by the time September 1997 came, I would have been a wealthy man. The August that followed highlighted the pressure that was ahead. Progress was on schedule but what was left to achieve seemed many months and a lot of hard work away.

There would be a good few in the team who could identify their receding, greying hairline, their well bitten nails, their suitcases under their eyes, along with their 'crows feet' and their emerging pot bellies as being the result of the twelve months that lay ahead, (plus those who could blame their pot bellies on The Bromilow).

The Writer

In construction terms life can easily get viewed in projects completed rather than in the years in which they took place. For myself 1996 and 1997 were 'The Reebok Stadium', with nearly two years of my life absorbed by the project.

My role with this project was that of senior quantity surveyor. As one of a team of 35 staff we built this stadium from the ground up and these following monthly sections charts both our progress and my personal recollections of an arduous yet very gratifying period of my life.

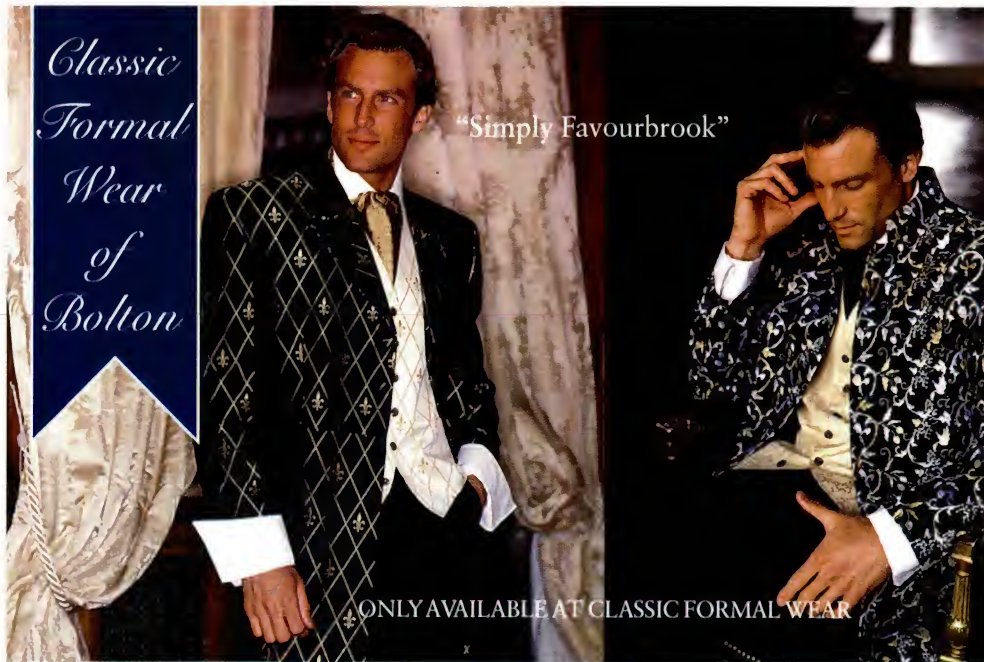


Piling rigs commence foundation works.

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Simon Marland Accountant & Historian BWFC Bolton Wanderers



Burnden Park in 1997.

The Vicar of Christ Church Sunday School, Bolton, could have had little notion of the future of the acorn that he planted in 1874. His scholars and teachers formed an outdoor recreational club and the Reverend F.F. Wright was made its President.

In 1877 the Reverend objected to his club holding meetings in his school unless he was present. On 28th August that year the footballers amongst the club re-christened themselves Bolton Wanderers and established their headquarters in the more cheerful atmosphere of a hostelry.

They immediately began to take part in the move to popularise the game. Difficulties came aplenty, success and adversity came alike but the men of the early days carried Bolton Wanderers through.

The club was one of the twelve founder members of the Football League in 1888. Six years later they reached the FA Cup Final for the first time, losing to Notts County, and in 1895 left Pikes Lane and moved to Burnden Park.

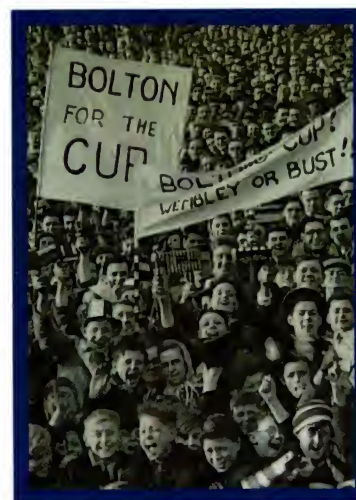
Burnden Park became one of the most famous grounds in the country, hosting the 1901 FA Cup Final replay, a number of FA Cup semi finals, and saw a record crowd of 69,912 for a Bolton v Manchester City FA Cup tie in 1933. The ground also saw tragedy when in March 1946, 33 spectators lost their lives when a barrier collapsed.

Before the second World War Bolton Wanderers were second division champions in 1909, and won the FA Cup in 1923 (the first final played at Wembley), 1926 and 1929. The team of the 1920's is generally considered to be the greatest fielded by the club. Not only did they secure the Cup on three occasions they also finished third in the first division in 1921 and 1925.

During the 1930's the club slipped out of the top flight but returned in 1935 to put together a run of 29 consecutive years as members of the old first division.

Like other clubs, they were struck by a grievous blow by the second World War. The whole team joined up at the outbreak of hostilities and the captain, wing half Harry Goslin, lost his life in action in Italy. Things gradually got back to normal and the club won the Football League North war cup in 1945 by defeating Manchester United over two legs. They followed this up with a victory over the Southern winners, Chelsea, at Stamford Bridge.

*Loyal fans cheer on the
"TROTTERS" in the 1958
F.A. cup run.*



Wembley Stadium F.A. Cup 1923.



It was during this period that the club produced a great personality and one of England's greatest forwards in Nat Lofthouse. He went on to become the clubs record goalscorer with 285 first class goals. He also scored 30 goals in 33 England appearances, later becoming the Wanderers coach, manager and is now the club President.

The FA Cup brought the Wanderers to prominence in the 1950's. In 1953 they lost 4-3 to Blackpool when injuries in the final twenty minutes cost them the game. In 1958 the cup came back to Bolton when two Nat Lofthouse goals defeated Manchester United.

The sixties proved to be a difficult time for the club. Relegation was suffered from division one in 1964, they narrowly missed out on a quick return a season later and it was to be 1978 before the club got back into the top flight.

In 1971 the Wanderers suffered relegation to the third division for the first time but won the championship in 1973 to begin a climb back up the League ladder. After two near misses the club won the second division championship in 1978 but their stay in the top flight was to last for only two seasons.

Unfortunately, the slide couldn't be arrested and by 1987 the Wanderers found themselves in the basement of the Football League. The ten years that followed brought about the most exciting decade in the clubs history both on and off the park.

In 1988 promotion was won from the fourth division and a year later the club savoured a Wembley success in the Sherpa Van Trophy. In both 1990 and 1991 the club reached the third division play offs and in 1993 finally won promotion. In that same season the club gained national prominence by knocking Liverpool out of the FA Cup at Anfield.

In 1994 the Wanderers reached the FA Cup quarter finals for the first time since 1959. They did so by beating Premiership sides Everton and Arsenal on their own grounds and Aston Villa at Burnden Park.

The Premiership was reached in 1995 with an incredible 4-3 Wembley win over Reading in the play-off final. After just one season the club were relegated but bounced back at the first attempt.

1996/97 season proved to be the most successful League season in the clubs history as they won the first division championship. Club records tumbled. Most points in a season (98), most goals scored in a season (100) and most wins in a season (28).

It also proved to be the end of an era as the championship trophy was presented at the final Burnden Park game to make it a happy ending to 102 years at the ground.

The club kicked off the 1997/98 season back in the Premiership and at their new 25,000 all seater Reebok Stadium.

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The idea of a Sports Village had been a dream of Bolton Council for a number of years and discussions had taken place with potential partners. These had proved fruitless.

However, when Bolton Wanderers were promoted in 1993 they faced the daunting task of improving Burnden Park or relocating to a new stadium, to meet the requirements of the Taylor Report, so it seemed natural that the two should get together.

Talks between the Club and the Council took place and the authority came up with the idea of Middlebrook as a possibility. Other areas were looked at but Middlebrook was the most attractive of all the sites.

The possibility of a partnership with the Wanderers fitted in with the plans. A major new stadium for football and other uses could form the centre piece for our ambitious proposal and attract the prestige and backing it required.

Then came the search for a developer who could help put the dream together.

The Emerson Group (including Orbit Developments) became interested and the proposals were enlarged to include more leisure, shopping, housing and business and office parks as well as the community sports and leisure facilities and the 25,000 seater stadium. The additional components would help finance the project and provide a greater variety to the site.

The business park is particularly important for the Council, providing opportunities for new and expanding businesses in the Borough. Following long and detailed discussions, Hitachi have been attracted to the site to develop a factory for new car components and the first phase will open in Spring 1998.

Substantial grants have been secured for the Middlebrook development including almost £5 million from the European Regional Development Fund towards infrastructure.

Together with Bolton Wanderers the authority is working on the development of the community sports and leisure facilities which will include indoor and outdoor tennis courts, health and fitness facilities, budget accommodation, a floodlit athletics track, a full-size football pitch, and multi-use games pitches.

A large grant from the Lawn Tennis Association for the indoor complex has already been won and a decision from the Lottery Board on some £9 million-plus of funding towards the project is awaited.

The new Reebok Stadium and the developments at Middlebrook have been the culmination of several years hard work by the Council, Bolton Wanderers, and Orbit Developments. Asda opened its doors in September, and were followed by other famous companies over the coming months including the Warner Brothers cinema in January 1998.

Middlebrook should be completed by the middle of 1999, providing work for over 3,000 people, housing, shopping, leisure and entertainment for the people of Bolton and the North West.

"The partnership between the Council, the Wanderers and Orbit have proved to be one of the most successful of its kind in the country and has brought much needed jobs and investment to the area," said Councillor Bob Howarth, Leader of the Council.



Orbit Developments kicks off at Middlebrook

**Simon Wilson - Director
of Orbit Developments.**

Middlebrook is the North West's largest leisure and retail park, ideally located at junction 6 of the M61 motorway, adjacent to the Reebok Stadium. It is a joint venture development between Bolton Wanderers Football Club, Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council and Orbit Developments, the commercial division of the Emerson Group. Formed in the late 1960's, Orbit Developments has become one of the largest privately-owned development and investment companies in the country.

In addition to providing extensive retail and leisure facilities alongside the new Reebok Stadium, Middlebrook will have a ten acre tennis centre developed in association with the Lawn Tennis Association, a business park offering 250,000 sq. ft of office space, a 14 acre residential housing area and a 500,000 sq. ft. industrial and warehousing development. The impact of all this on the local economy has been staggering with already almost 3,000 new jobs being created.

The leisure and retail facilities are amongst the finest in the country with a 12 screen Warner Village cinema, Hollywood Bowl and world renowned names such as McDonalds, Pizza Hut and KFC. Shopping at Middlebrook has over 3,000 car parking spaces serving retailers Asda, Alders at Home, Boots the Chemist, Furniture Workshop, Pets at Home, Textstyle World, Kingsbury Interiors, Scottish Power, Waldmans, Craft World, Carphone Warehouse, American Golf, Tog 24, Sports Division, JD Sports and JJB Sports.

Orbit Developments are also involved in a joint initiative with William Hargreaves Limited at The Valley in Bolton. The Valley is an integrated commercial, industrial and leisure development which lies within Bolton's City Challenge area.

The scheme consists of St. Peter's Office Park which will provide 250,000 sq. ft. of high quality office accommodation and Britannia Business Park which will offer some 450,000 sq. ft. of industrial and warehousing units in a variety of sizes.

Grant aid including regional selective assistance may be available to qualifying users. In addition, partners in the City Challenge Initiative - Bolton and Bury TEC, Bolton Metropolitan College and Bolton Institute of Higher Education - can provide bespoke training packages to companies.

The Reebok Stadium, Middlebrook centre and The Valley are a magnificent endorsement of the strength of Bolton's future in which Orbit Developments and the Emerson Group are proud to be involved.

Jones Homes - A Winner In Bolton!

The supporters of B.W.F.C. know all about tradition and success and since building its first residential development in Bolton some ten years ago these same qualities have enabled Jones Homes to become one of the areas most respected development companies.

A Tradition of Building Success

Jones Homes is the founder member of the Emerson Group, a privately owned property development company with its headquarters in Alderley Edge, Cheshire.

With 40 years experience it has established an enviable reputation for building award-winning homes of character and individuality in highly desirable locations, throughout the UK.

The hallmark of a Jones home is luxury accommodation coupled with high standards of construction, design and specification. The company's qualities have been recognised over the years by the National House Building Council in its 'Pride In The Job' schemes, the prestigious What House? Awards, the combined NHBC/DoE/RIBA Housing Design Awards and the Daily Mail/NHMB Green Leaf Awards.

Jones Homes offers its customers an unrivalled combination of service, quality, choice and value. Personal recommendation and repeat business are cornerstones of the company's success with families moving up over the years from one Jones home to another.

Nowhere is this more true than in Bolton where Jones Homes has enjoyed a long and happy relationship with the town and its residents.

'Premiership' Class in Bolton

Jones Homes earliest developments in Bolton date back to 1988. The company's first venture was Rydal Court, (Whitcroft Road), a new retirement homes development which was followed by Arundel Place, (also off Whitcroft Road).

Evidence that Bolton was to become an important location for Jones Homes came in 1990 when the new showhome opening weekend at Arundel Park (off Beaumont Road) attracted some 300 visitors! Beaumont Chase (Wigan Road), Beaumont Rise (Hulton Lane), Sunninghill Park (St. Helen's Road) and Belmont Park (Wilkinson Road) are current developments where prospective home buyers have a choice from mews style to detached to suit all tastes and lifestyles.

Towards the end of 1998 Jones Homes will commence a new development at Middlebrook to provide 271 three and four bedroom semi-detached and detached homes. It will give the new workforce at the Middlebrook complex an opportunity to purchase top quality, value for money homes in an ideal location.

Living in a Jones home in Bolton means that families have the convenience of living close to the town's modern amenities while still enjoying the lovely open countryside of the West Pennine Moors. Showhomes are open every day from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm during the week and from 11.00 am to 5.00 pm at weekends.

So the message to house hunters looking for something special in Bolton is: "Come and join Bolton's other winning team!" For more information about Jones Homes in Bolton: call the Property Shop on 01625 588300.

Site Plan



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(Sunninghill Park
and Belmont Park
to name but two!)

has been the hallmark of our game.

Like Bolton, recent promotion has seen us move into a different league with our involvement in the Reebok Stadium and the Middlebrook leisure, retail and business parks.

As a result, you could say we're over the moon!

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Reebok Stadium

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WINTER HILL,
BOLTON

DETACHED HOMES, SUNNINGHILL PARK, BOLTON



DETACHED HOMES, BEAUMONT RISE, BOLTON

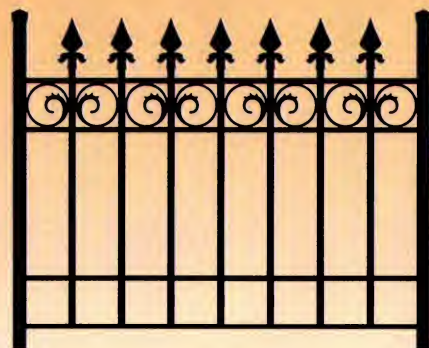
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Reebok Stadium



When a new Stadium opens, what can often be forgotten is the closure of the old Stadium. It is important to allow fans, especially fans who have spent most of their lives supporting the Club at one Stadium, to take part in the closure. And for them also to retain a treasured memento to remind them of great victories and happy times..... and also a few sad ones.

To commemorate the closure of Burnden Park the Directors of Bolton Wanderers Football Club commissioned thirteen initiatives which allowed not only fans of the Club, but also collectors and football enthusiasts nationwide to take part in the historic closure.

The events were organised under the banner 'Farewell to Burnden Park, the End of an Era', 1895-1997. Early planning began in late 1996 some six months prior to the Stadium's official closure on Friday 25th April 1997. Over 10,000 colour brochures including mail order forms were sent out to season ticket holders in February 1997 and by mid April over 10,000 orders had been received. The 13 initiatives were advertised as opposite.

The end of an era proved extremely successful. Amongst the highlights were

- Gold Programmes sold out within 3 days
- 160 fans bought a framed piece of the Board Room carpet
- over 100 teams with players of all ages from 8 to 80 played on Burnden Park
- Roll call fully subscribed
- Limited edition plates, 1000 sold in 4 weeks
- Over 140 fans bought a piece of Burnden Park Turf
- Over 2000 people attended the Grand Auction
- End of an Era Video included some archive footage from the early 1900's, never seen before by Wanderers fans.



10,000 Brochures sent out.



A commemorative programme was produced.



Play on Burnden Park.



Items from the Auction.

1. Book. Burnden Park - The Final Years 1987 - 1997

Burnden Park has seen many ups and downs for the Club none more so than in the last ten years. Burnden Park - The Final Years 1987-1997, covers that period with a full statistical analysis and pen pics of every player to have represented the Club in that period.

2. Grand Draw

Win one of the shirts worn by the players involved in the final game played at Burnden Park; there will be a total of 13 shirts to be won (5 draw tickets are enclosed).

3. Farewell Video

A 90 minute video appropriately entitled 'The Final Whistle' re-lives many special recorded moments at Burnden Park. The Final Whistle features exclusive footage from the BBC. Granada and archive film companies and has been produced on the highest standard broadcasting equipment. A collector's item and great present for any Wanderers fan.

4. Last Match Programme

A special A4 size, 68 page souvenir issue will be produced to mark the event. Commemorating 102 years of football at Burnden Park, this will be a must for fans and collectors alike. A limited edition of 1000 copies finished in gold are available for collectors.

5. Listing in the Final Match Programme

Secure your place in history - for just £5 your name will appear in the special 'I was There' roll call that will feature in the souvenir issue final match programme.

6. Play on Burnden Park

A once in-a-lifetime opportunity to tread the same turf as today's and yesterday's greats. For a limited period only, your team can play a 70 minute match at Burnden Park with full use of the Club's facilities, kit, referee, referee's assistants (linesmen!) and, if required, your opposition can also be provided.

7. Sportsman's Banquet and Sportsman's Dinner

In May 1997 the final Sportsman's Dinners will be staged in the Executive Club at Burnden Park. The Sportsman's 'Banquet' will be attended by great players from the past., while players from today's squad will be at the Sportsman's Dinner. Nat Lofthouse has donated items to auction at the Banquet.

8. Framed Limited Edition Prints

Internationally renowned sports artist Brian Halton has been commissioned to depict the final match on canvas and a limited number of high quality prints will be produced. Each print will be individually numbered and carry the signature not only of the artist but also of Bolton's team that day and a number of Wanderers stars of the past.

9. Memorabilia Auction

With 102 years of history going under the hammer, this is your opportunity to be the proud owner of one of hundreds of highly collectable authentic Club items of memorabilia and ephemera.

10. Commemorative Merchandise

Our Club Shop has produced a selection of commemorative items designed to keep alive the memory of Burnden Park forever. From ties, mugs and clothing to posters and key rings, there is something for every taste, age and pocket, some items will be made from genuine material from Burnden Park.

11. Burnden Park Turf

Recreate the spirit of Burnden Park in your own garden by buying half a metre of the historic turf.

12. Boardroom Carpet

The Boardroom has been the location of countless historic events over the years and its carpet has been trodden by legends of football folklore. A number of sections carrying the unique BWFC logo will be framed and made available to supporters (two sizes available).

12a. Bone China Plate

A limited edition of 1000 Bone China Plates has been commissioned to depict the final league match at Burnden Park. Not only a lasting memory but a superb investment too.



The East Stand steelwork, the final shape can clearly be seen.

With the end of Autumn looming and less than twelve months to completion, the maintenance of the projects progression was paramount. Every hour and day of non-productivity would mean that this time was still to be made up. On a construction project, the thing that cannot be controlled is the weather and on a daily basis members of staff would apprehensively await the weather forecast for the forthcoming days.

Luckily, just as the summer and holiday suntans were wearing thin the sun decided to make a most welcome return to Middlebrook. With it a welcome boost to site progress and a source of inspiration for the much maligned site workforce, who by this time must have been wondering if the rain would manage to stop before the frost set in for the Winter.

The tonnes of steelwork that had landed on site were continuing to be assembled like a huge meccano set and with it the welcome sight of a frame that resembled a football stand.

Piling had continued throughout the period and with it the completion of the gigantic piles on which the floodlights would be sited.

The intricacies of the stadium design cannot be explained in a script such as this nor by anything penned by myself. However for those who managed to witness the construction of the mast bases in any way at all will concur with the magnitude that is beyond belief and a feat of structural engineering. The volume of concrete and steel required to construct the bases ensured countless late nights and lost weekends.



Steelwork and concrete are prepared for early start.

Luckily, just as the summer and holiday suntans were wearing thin the sun decided to make a most welcome return to Middlebrook



Piling takes place on the East Stand.

The East Stand starts to take shape as groundworks continue for the South Stand





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Visits to other Stadiums-the decision had been made



**Des McBain, Chief Executive,
Bolton Wanderers Football Club**

Bolton Wanderers Football Club would have a new 25,000 seater home in Lostock, Bolton. As well as the seating what else would be required? Myself and Director Graham Ball set out on a fact finding mission which was to take in some twenty stadiums, sixteen in England, two in Scotland and two in Holland.

We would find that on every visit the camaraderie within Football was always in evidence. The help offered was going to be invaluable when the final design was agreed.

Huddersfield was our first port of call. The new McAlpine Stadium, designed by Architects, The Lobb Partnership, had created something different. Bolton Wanderers wanted to give their supporters something unique. Why not use the same Architects.

From there it was a case of fitting as many Stadiums as possible into an extremely tight schedule. The deadline of August 1997 was fast approaching and detail was of paramount importance.

A three days trip to Holland was to be of most benefit to the project. Firstly visiting the site of the unfinished Ajax Stadium in Amsterdam we had a private viewing inside the Stadium with the Project Manager of the Builders, Ballast Needham. At the end of the tour he referred to a new book recently published in Europe not then available in the UK which gave UEFA and FIFA recommendations for facilities in new Stadiums and presented us with a copy. This was to be our bible in the months to come.



The next Stadium visited was PSV Eindhoven.

A Stadium which did not rely entirely on Football for its income but supplemented by Commercial activities. Offices were being used by Companies five days a week closing for the day of the match.

A self contained restaurant was open six days a week to the general public, the entrance via a lift from the street. Used on match day by the supporters. Inside the ground we saw a Club the full length of the main stand with cinema style seating behind glass with banks of televisions for a particular type of clientele who preferred to be indoors in the warmth and comfort rather than the atmosphere of being out in the open air.

We were to see a similar design at Nottingham Forest, theirs being behind one goal. The floodlights by Phillips impressed as did the heaters from the roofs blowing warm air onto the supporters in extremely cold weather.

Back to the English scene with visits to the Arsenal North Stand (also designed by Lobb) and the Chelsea North Stand with the hospitality and disabled facilities they provided. Newcastle United with their new merchandising shop, Coventry City had new refreshment bar facilities and Norwich City with their First Aid/Ambulance Room which included facilities capable of carrying out minor operations.

At Middlesbrough we found another brand new Stadium only just completed and operating. Blackburn Rovers, Leeds United, Leicester City, Wolverhampton Wanderers, Burnley, Liverpool and Everton, all gave us vital pieces of information.

Then up to Glasgow to see Rangers and Celtic.

Rangers had their restaurant overlooking the pitch where patrons could book an evening meal in a window box with the Stadium silhouetted in the background. Celtic had numerous executive suites, function rooms and bars.

The information was collated and presented to the Board of Directors. The most important facts to come out of the visits was the honesty from every single Club.

Where they had made mistakes and, given the opportunity to start again, what they would do differently. The help given by all the Clubs was to be invaluable. Obviously, everything seen would not necessarily work in the Bolton Stadium.

The Board accepted our guidance of the qualities required, insisting again that our new Stadium must be unique and a landmark architectural statement.

The demanding brief for the Engineers and Architects was formulated and so far, the results have surpassed all our original expectations. A current response alone, repays all our efforts - hot off the press is the news that at their recent special meeting, The Institution of Structural Engineers is to make three world wide Special Awards, covering the Nagano Olympic Memorial Arena, Japan, the Tsing Ma Bridge, Hong Kong and Reebok Stadium U.K. The award ceremony being in The Churchill Room, House of Commons, London on the 27th February 1998 and the Citation quotes.

"That a Special Award be made to Deakin Callard & Partners and Watson Steel for the Reebok Stadium, Bolton, Greater Manchester, U.K. for an elegant large span structure, using fully welded tubular steel construction and pre-stressed tie-bars to provide a high specification Sports Stadium for Bolton Wanderers Football Club".



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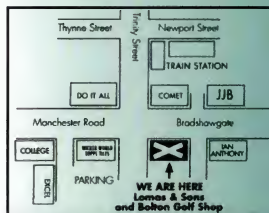
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BOLTON GOLF SHOP

GOLF



Birse Construction became involved in this prestigious project during the month of March 1996 and the tender team's work culminated in a presentation to Bolton Wanderers on 11th April 1996.

The thrust of our presentation focused on both the fast track nature of the programme and the maximum amount of money to expend (i.e. £25 million). The only way the project could succeed was to enter into a partnership agreement whereby the objectives for the scheme were the same for both Birse and Bolton Wanderers.

Within weeks the club confirmed that they wished Birse to carry out the works and on 22nd July 1996 construction work commenced on site.

The scheme was built under a JCT 1981 Design and Build Contract with a guaranteed maximum price agreement.

The project, however, was administered and managed in a partnering ethos. The key to this arrangement was that both Bolton and Birse had clearly defined and aligned objectives, which were:-

- (a) Building the best possible Stadium for the maximum price of £25 million to the desired quality and within the stipulated time frame.
- (b) To achieve these objectives a committee was to meet regularly to plan the project and ensure that the above objectives were sustained.

The success of the project was founded on the trust and honest working relationship between the four concerned, who were:-

Eric O'Neil (O'Neil & Partners) - Quantity Surveyor; Jan Kozłowski (BWFC Employers Agent) - Project Manager; Dave Murphy (Birse) Senior Project Manager; Andy Hurst (Birse) Project Commercial Manager.

Birse undertook to construct a 25,000 all seater football Stadium incorporating associated administration areas, leisure, community and executive facilities to be completed by 6th September 1997; a 60 week programme.

Watson Steelwork were appointed to produce the steel framework, roof and floodlight masts and are one of the few steelwork contractors who had the ability to cope with a Project of this size.

The roof steelwork design is unique and it was necessary to prove the design for movement and loading.

Watson's began on site in Sept 1996. Over the next 8 months, despite encountering the severest of weather conditions, they erected over 3,200 tonnes to the main structure, 1,500 tonnes to the roof steelwork and masts and concluded their works in May 1997.

When Birse commenced earthwork operations in July 1996, this had to be carried out around the already constructed playing surface.

The whole programme had been planned carefully around the newly laid pitch to avoid the need to gain access to this area. This meant that works had to be constructed in a particular sequence, with just two points of access to the inside of the Stadium: the North East tunnel and the South West tunnel.

The main structural steel frame is constructed on approximately 1,000 concrete piles, some 16 metres into the ground at the deepest point.

The four corner masts are constructed of two large foundations in each corner, consisting of 48 number piles (16 metres), 450 m³ of concrete and 90 tonnes of reinforcement per foundation.

The feature of the external facade is the glazed blockwork to the East and West elevations. This is the first time that a polished block has been used in such an expanse. The West Stand is constructed to give the visual effect of a goal post arrangement from a distance.

The programme demands called for manpower levels to run at 120 to the early part of the programme, increasing to 300 at Christmas 1996 and peaking in at 500 during the final stages prior to opening.

Within executive areas a high standard of finishes is designed to provide a hotel ambience, allowing the facility to be multi-purpose and capable of being functional seven days a week. The Directors of Bolton Wanderers actively participated in the selection of materials, colour schemes, room layouts, and mechanical and electrical design and operation, especially the Chairman, Mr. Gordon Hargreaves, who influenced greatly the internal design to the executive areas.



Whilst all this was going on, the pressure and tension was being added by the fact that Bolton were sweeping back to the Premiership and the expectations of the fans were high.

At the end of the Project, the work content had increased from £25 million to £31 million, the first home fixture was brought forward some 5 days to Sept 1st (the season started early because of the World Cup). Although the Stadium did open on time, the whole of the works were concluded in full on 30th October 1997.

It is Birse Construction's belief that relationships and trust played a major part in the Project. The people who have been involved and contributed so much will hold the project in the highest regard in the knowledge they were taking part in history. In summary, all at Birse wish to thank our sub-contractors, suppliers and design team members for their exceptional efforts in constructing the magnificent Reebok Stadium. Finally, we would take this opportunity to wish the Directors and Supporters of Bolton every success and happiness in their new Stadium.

We are pleased to have played our part.



Building Relationships Kozłowski; O'Neil; Murphy and Hurst.

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The Floodlights - Phil Hampson - Resident Engineer BWFC



Individual tubes up to 1067 mm diameter with 90 mm thick walls make up the main mast body

One of the most striking features of the Stadium are the four tubular steel tripod masts designed by Watson Steel which not only support the roof, but also carry the diamond shaped floodlight platforms. The masts were brought to site as individual tubes up to 1067 mm diameter with 90 mm thick walls and then assembled and welded. The feet of these framed structures sit on reinforced concrete caps the largest of which weighs one thousand tons and contains sixty tons of reinforcement. In turn these bases are supported by reinforced concrete piles up to fourteen metres in length. The masts are forty-three metres high and are topped by a thirteen metre high tapered tube to which the floodlight support frames are fixed. These frames which are eight and a half metres across carry fifty lamps at the North West and South West corners and thirty one lamps at the North East and South East corners to reduce the glare on the Television Gantry which is situated under the West Stand roof. An additional seven lights are fitted under the gantry all supplied and fitted by Phillips.

There are four remote control systems and the lights are on a sequenced start up to reduce loading on the overall system. Three different types of lens are fitted to various lights to focus the light which produces either 800 or 1200 Lux at pitch level depending on the type of match being played. The focusing points of these lights are computer controlled.

Apart from football matches and sporting events on the pitch, often the floodlights will be on for various other reasons. Because of the Stadium's striking design and appearance, film companies often ask permission to film the Stadium as a backdrop to a television series, advertisement or documentary.

In the evenings when corporate events take place in the Banqueting Suites, organisations make arrangements to have the floodlights lit to make a spectacular arrival at the Stadium for their guests.



*Reebok by Night
Photograph: Ian Lawson*

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Unistrut contracts secretary Claire Fitzgerald has never doubted her ability to make it to the top. But she was surer than ever of scaling the heights and avoiding the drop when she decided to climb one of the 50 metre floodlighting towers at Bolton Wanderer's futuristic new Reebok Stadium!

Claire's confidence was well-placed, because she was protected by a "Ladder Latch" Fall Arrest System installed on all four towers by her employers, Westhoughton based safety specialists Unistrut Safety Systems, Northern.

Provided to protect maintenance engineers who clean and service the lights, the Fall Arrest System enables them to clip onto a cable at the foot of a tower and remain safely attached

throughout the climb - and as they work at the top. The patented Latchways 'trans-fastener' means that they don't even need to unhitch to pass the cable's intermediate supports.

"It was so reassuring and the freedom of movement was amazing" says Claire.

Let's hope that Bolton are equally good at climbing the ladder and avoiding the drop!

Claire can be reached at:



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Structural Framework before topping out.



The feet of these framed structures sit on reinforced concrete caps the largest of which weighs one thousand tons and contains sixty tons of reinforcement

Left. Three different types of lens are fitted to various lights to focus the light which produces either 800 or 1200 Lux at pitch level



The huge diamond shaped lights are moved into position ready for hoisting into their final housings.



November

Mast foundations

As November approached, December and the ensuing Christmas could not come too soon. Work was still on progress but as the intensity of the construction process increased so did the level of co-ordination and management required to ensure our aims would be met.

The relentless rainfall had returned and our October oasis had gone, however, this time the rain had brought with it the frost and the snow. As if dealing with one element raging against you wasn't enough, now there were three in abundance.

On a personal note, this is where the joys of being an office worker on a construction site genuinely begin. With tactical prowess one can engineer the situation where the kettle and toaster are never far from arms reach and the purchase of an electric heater more than makes up for my earlier failure to obtain a fan.

The conditions on site had become fairly treacherous and were not a place for the faint hearted. Having listened to my grandfather's recollections of his time in the trenches I knew this would be the closest assimilation I could expect. Plodding knee deep through the mud and water and countering their attempts to enter into my bootspace, site visits provided a real source of adventure and footwork mastery.

Likened to a football pitch it was these times that we were camped deep in our own half soaking up the pressure of the oppositions attack.



The huge concrete foundation for the floodlight masts take shape.



The first concrete "steppings" goes into position.



Structural steelwork begins.

The relentless rainfall
had returned and our
October oasis had gone,

*Tons of steel to reinforce the floodlight
mast foundations.*



Reebok



Aston Villa
Football Club

The Reebok Story

David Singleton -
Vice President Reebok UK

1995 saw the centenary of Reebok. Although not until years later was the name of Reebok adopted, the man who created the birth of a great Company was as innovative as his present day successors in the design of a product that was to influence the direction of sport.

In 1895 Joe Foster, a craftsman shoemaker from Bolton, was a keen runner and member of Bolton Primrose Harriers. In the search for a sporting lead he made, as legend would have it in his garden shed, the first simple pair of spiked running shoes that were little more than a pair of ordinary running shoes with nails crafted through the soles.

This gave him the winning edge when running on cinders and soft grass. Nine years later, in 1904, a runner called Alf Shrub broke three World running records at different distances in one ten mile race wearing a pair of Joe Foster's running shoes. His record time was 50 minutes 40.6 seconds and his running shoes cost him the princely sum of five shillings and sixpence - twenty seven and a half pence in today's money.

Other World and Olympic medals followed rapidly for many different athletes.

The development of Foster's shoes took a back seat in 1914 with the outbreak of the First World War. The small factory turned to production of army boots to aid the war effort.

As soon as peace was restored to the World, Joe Foster renewed his interest in developing racing shoes and soon he was able to boast that many athletes were again winning Olympic medals wearing Foster's shoes. But perhaps the most famous was the Gold won by an

athlete - Lord Burghley - in 1928 wearing a pair of his spikes. Decades later, the feats of Lord Burghley and other athletes wearing Foster's shoes were to form the basis for the Oscar winning film 'Chariots of Fire.' Further sporting successes were to follow and by the time Joe died in 1933 Bolton Wanderers, Liverpool and Arsenal players were wearing Foster football boots.

Joe's great legacy was left to his sons John and James.

Recognising the opportunity provided by their father, the Foster boys expanded the range of sporting shoes into other areas, building the reputation of Foster's shoes for boxing, rugby, field events and road walking, with the small factory in Deane Road, Bolton, expanded and renamed 'The Olympic Works.'



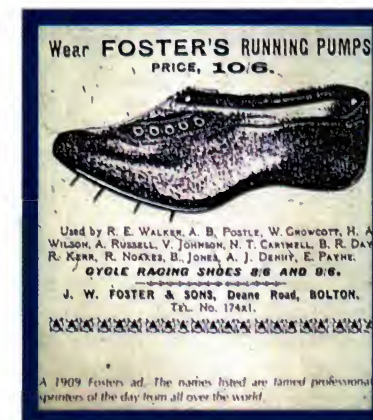
Joe Foster, shoemaker.



But 1939 halted the progress of the Company with a return to manufacturing army boots for the Second World War which, in 1943, saw the factory bombed and production stopped.

A new era began for the Foster family in 1948, when the new 'Olympic Works' was opened on a different site in Bolton and Joe Foster's two grandsons were apprenticed to the firm. As the decade of the 50's dawned, a hint of the international potential of Foster's sports shoes was evident when Moscow Dynamo - the first Soviet football team to visit the West - all wore Foster's boots.

But perhaps the greatest satisfaction for the family came in 1958, when Nat Lofthouse scored the winning goal against Manchester United in the FA Cup Final at Wembley wearing, of course, a pair of Foster's football boots.



Early marketing of Foster's running shoes.

Reflecting on this period in the development of the Foster Sports Shoe business, Joe Foster Junior said, "We needed a brand name. I wanted an animal name and just had a feeling about the letter 'R.' So I went to the dictionary and found 'Reebok'...a fast and agile gazelle." In this simple way one of the World's greatest sports names was born.

Throughout the next two decades Reebok grew steadily, their running shoes remaining popular with top athletes. And with the boom in sport and fitness Reebok soon became known and worn in every country in the World.

Although synonymous with global sporting achievement, Reebok have always maintained the closest of links with both Joe Foster's home town and their famous football team, 'The Trotters.' As a player for both the Wanderers and England, Nat Lofthouse had worn Reebok boots, not because of sentimentality but because they were the best. The partnership with Bolton Wanderer's began to flourish in 1987 when, in an FA Cup match against Forest, the Reebok logo first appeared on those famous white shirts as kit sponsors. Then, in 1990, Reebok confirmed its commitment by becoming Club sponsors.

As innovative as Joe Foster may have been, working alone in his garden shed just over a hundred years ago, he could not have dreamt that his work would ultimately lead to the creation of a name famous in sport throughout the World. Or that one day a magnificent Stadium would be built in his home town within walking distance from where the story began.

Just as Joe Foster created a sporting symbol at the end of the last century, The Reebok is a symbol for sport in the next century,

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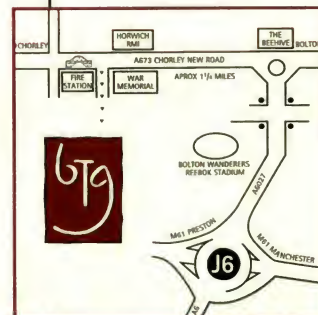
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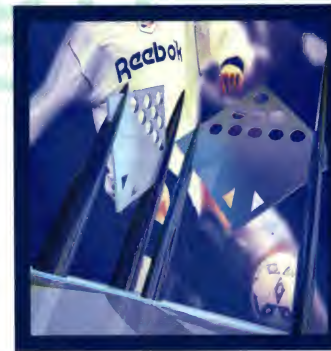
ATOM are proud to be the graphic designers for
Bolton Wanderers Football Club and the Reebok Stadium

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Reebok Stadium

Graphic Design - Mike Trevena Atom Design Associates



Left to right: Internal signage system visuals, utilising the Stadium logo. Stadium/BWFC branded wine bottles. Visuals showing how external signage could be applied using the floodlight mast and diamond shapes.



1996 saw the start of many changes for BWFC, the most significant of which was, of course, the move to a new home. From the initial plans, it was obvious that the visual impact of the stadium on the landscape and the local community was going to be immense. Never in its 102 illustrious years had the Club had the opportunity to make such a bold statement of its ambitions. It was at this stage that designs were submitted by Atom Design Associates with the intention of carrying this statement into the next millennium.

Today's emblem, designed by Mike Trevena of Atom, was chosen as a reflection of excitement and celebration, and was directly inspired by the visual images of supporters celebrating, with scarves and flags, Bolton's trip to Wembley for the Coca Cola cup final and the ongoing atmosphere on the team's return to Burnden Park. The ribbons, which bring movement, colour and excitement to the new emblem, are distinctive, unique and instantly recognisable, and are seen as being an integral part of any future marketing and club promotion.

Designers Atom have also taken full advantage of one of the Stadium's most distinctive architectural features: its floodlights. The now familiar diamond shape has provided an extremely strong visual image and it has been used to identify the Reebok stadium and its various 'products'. The diamond shape and ribbons lends itself to

a host of applications ranging from internal signage systems such as those in the Middlebrook exhibition centre and function suites, to embossing on bars and a custom-designed pattern on carpeting. Throughout the 'launch' and ongoing promotion of the Reebok Stadium and its ancillary facilities, all promotional material and graphics have made strong use of the new identity.



The ultimate goal.

Ian Anthony

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Reebok Stadium

Press Facilities

Alan Fullelove -
Press & PR Officer

Match action pictures are wired direct from The Reebok into the newspaper office.



Photographers set up their equipment pre-match.

In my capacity as Press Officer for Bolton Wanderers Football Club, I was given the task of designing and overseeing the installation of journalistic and photographic press facilities at the Reebok Stadium.

With almost 20 years experience of working in press boxes as a feature writer on various sports magazines and as a radio sports reporter, I was able to base my recommendations on practical first hand knowledge.

As far as I was concerned there were two major considerations to be borne in mind. Firstly that the football club should provide a clean, functional and comfortable working environment for the media. Secondly that seating within the press box area itself should allow ease of access and egress without unnecessary disturbance to fellow journalists.

Both these points were readily taken on board by the Wanderers' directors and the result is that working conditions for the media visiting The Reebok Stadium are recognised as being among the finest in the country.

International, national, regional and local journalists representing newspapers, magazines, radio and TV are based on the third floor of the main West stand. This area is accessed by lift or stairs from the main reception area and the media has use of two spacious rooms before the game, at half-time and post-match. Adequate refreshments are available to visiting pressmen from an hour before kick-off and this is certainly welcomed by those who may have travelled for several hours by road or rail to the game.

Press stewards are on hand to direct journalists to one or other of the 70 seats in the working area of the press box. The stewards also supply programmes and team changes along with any other relevant information that may be required.

Each seat at the desk space in the working area of the Reebok Stadium press box is fitted with both electrical power points and a telephone line. Several national newspapers have installed their own telephone points in the box while radio and television positions have been provided with modern ISDN, broadcast quality equipment. Very little, if anything, has been ignored from the original plan submitted to the board.

That is very definitely the case when one considers facilities at the Reebok for press photographers.

Based in the Stadium's North-East tunnel, some 40 press photographers can be accommodated in the photographer's wire-room. From this base pictures can be wired to newspaper offices all over the world using one or other of the 21 wire points provided by the club.

Press articles, reports and pictures play a major role in developing and maintaining interest in the game of professional football. No other sport can command as many column inches or hours of airtime. That is particularly true with the blanket coverage now given by Sky Television and TV facilities received a great deal of consideration as the Reebok Stadium was being developed.

BBC, Sky and Granada were all involved in several meetings to decide and approve parking areas for outside broadcast vehicles, routes for running camera and sound cables, size and accessibility of overhead camera gantry, position of permanent TV studio and post-match interview area and the number and exact positions of camera points around the playing area.

The outcome of the hours of time and effort is, we believe, a Stadium that is media friendly and one that provides a clean, comfortable working environment for all press representatives be they in newspapers, radio or television.

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The Visitor Centre - Tom Hall Visitor Centre Manager

*Peter Jones, Chairman of Orbit Developments;
Michael Heseltine, Deputy Prime Minister; Gordon
Hargreaves, Chairman BWFC and Nat Lofthouse,
President of Bolton Wanderers.*



*Matthew Browns 'Matty'
and Bolton's 'Lofty' join
forces to help in the
building of the new
Stadium.*

Secondly, within the Visitor Centre an exact size 'hospitality suite' was constructed. From here companies could experience a typical executive suite furnished and decorated to accommodate ten corporate guests on matchdays. It obviously did the trick as all 24 of the first phase suites and 22 of the second phase suites in the Eastern Nat Lofthouse Stand were sold prior to opening.

The Visitor Centre also showed the Football Club's commitment to the Bolton Wanderers supporters all of whom had their own particular queries regarding moving into the new Stadium some 5 miles away from Burnden Park.

The sheer size and height of the new Stadium proved ominous for many fans. At Burnden Park the 'highest' seat in the Stadium corresponded to a back seat in the lower tier at the new Reebok Stadium. No Bolton Wanderers fans had ever sat as 'high' to watch a home game as was offered by the upper tier seats at the new venue. And of course all fans had to make the decision of whether to choose an upper tier or lower tier seat without having the opportunity to get inside the new Stadium. Visits into the new stands would not only prove dangerous but also could slow down the building progress which was on a critical path.

Most days the Centre attracted around 250-350 visitors with weekends sometimes achieving 1,500 especially when Bolton were playing in the South of England. Many spectators would pay a daily visit. One particular fan came every weekday with his dog, sandwiches and flask, right through both summer and winter.

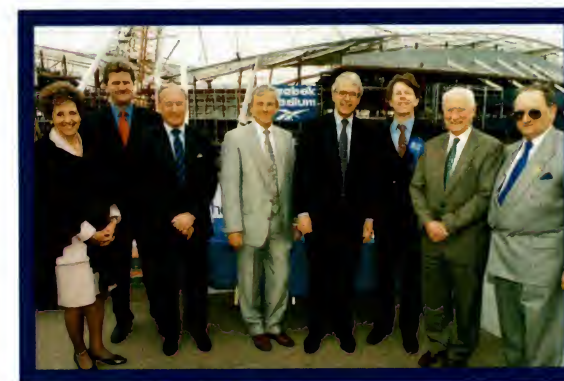
The Visitor Centre stayed open 7 days a week from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm in winter and until 7.30 pm in the summer months. Most days a staff of three were on hand to answer questions and on numerous occasions the first team players would call up to watch progress.

The Centre also hosted some V.I.P. visits. Michael Heseltine toured the Stadium in January 1997 and held his press conference in the hospitality suite. Prime Minister John Major was there in April 1997 as part of his election tour. Only one hour before the Prime Minister's visit David Singleton, President of Reebok and Gordon Hargreaves, Chairman of Bolton Wanderers had signed a multi year, multi million pound contract to name the Stadium The Reebok Stadium.

Late 1996 saw the visit of Millard Ochs, President of Warner Brothers International. Although Millard showed an interest in naming the Stadium 'The Warner Stadium' he was pipped at the post by Reebok. At weekends Lofty the lion was the star attraction, especially for younger fans. Lofty was to meet his long lost cousin Matty the lion at the Visitor Centre on the day the Stadium signed a 10 year Brewery Contract with Matthew Brown Plc.

In early September 1997 the Visitor Centre closed for business and was quickly transformed into new offices for the Clubs football and community staff. It had done its job well.

Following from the success achieved and interest shown a permanent new Visitor Centre, complete with Lecture Theatre, is expected to open adjoining the Reebok Club Shop during 1998.

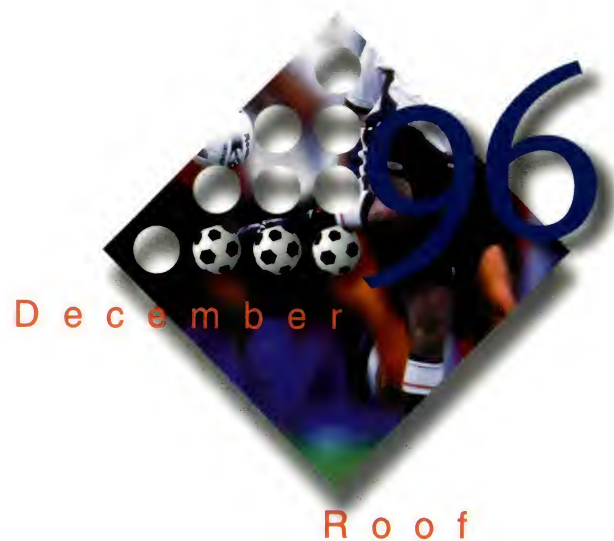


Prime Minister John Major visits the Reebok Stadium.

In December 1996 a Visitor Centre opened on the new Stadium site. By this date the structural steelwork was well underway and the building site was attracting many visitors, especially at weekends. The Visitor Centre had a number of purposes but primarily the Centre was to:-

- keep visitors off the building site for safety reasons;
- show Bolton Wanderers fans plans and artists drawings of the new Stadium;
- display an illuminated scale model of the Stadium;
- promote the 'End of an Era' initiatives underway at Burnden Park;
- answer season ticket enquiries and explain how fans would be relocated into the new Stadium.

The Visitor Centre had two other key functions. Firstly, on the roof of the building was a mock-up section from the main stands of the new Stadium. This allows fans to sample not only the quality of the seating, but also the viewing position and space between the rows of seats.



Early work starts on the South Stand.



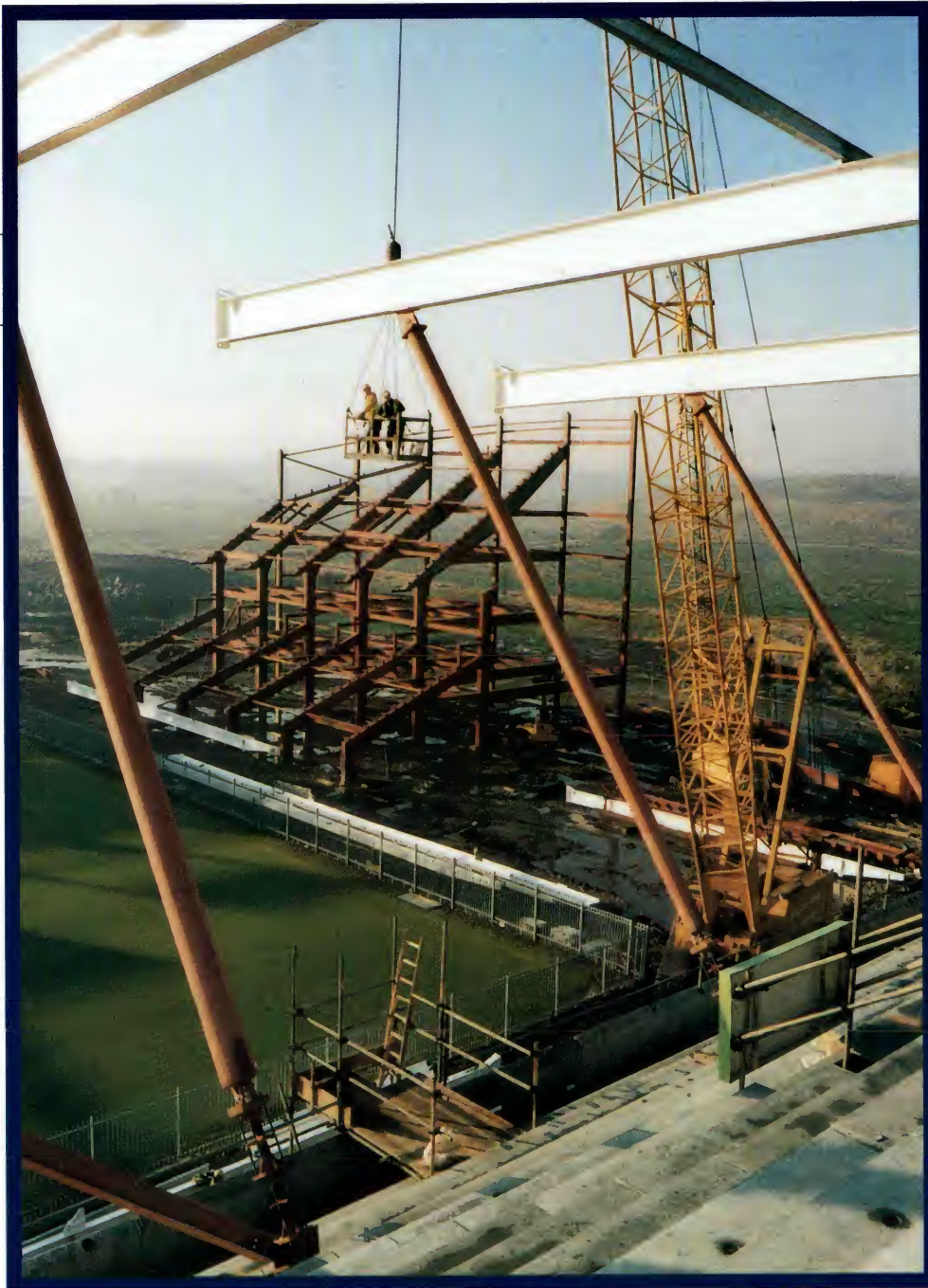
By December the pitch is well established.

The month of December is a welcome month to the building trade, Christmas parties and a two week shutdown to come. Well, one out of two in 1996 wasn't bad and I'm sure that the Georgian House and The Bromilow did not complain.

Site work progressed at a rate consistent with the requirements of the programme, whilst in the background Birse Construction and Bolton Wanderers continued to talk tactics and requirements for the second half of the game.

The progress up to Christmas had mainly concentrated on the substructure works and with it the structural steel frame. The period post Christmas would see the emphasis of the project change to the superstructure and with it the drive to obtain a watertight building.

The 1996 stage of the project had provided us all with the opportunity to experience the demands that were to be made of us come 1997, it was only to be hoped that the site team would return from the festive period with enough character and resolve to ensure completion.



The drive to obtain a watertight building

Left: Propping the roof steel work.



The South Stand takes shape.



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The Manager's View - Colin Todd Manager BWFC

It isn't everybody that is given the opportunity to be part of history in the making. And yet, with the construction and opening of our magnificent Reebok Stadium, that is just what happened to everyone connected with this football club.

We have all - players, staff and supporters - contributed to the making of history. We have all been in at the birth of a new and exciting era for Bolton Wanderers and, in years to come, we will tell our children and grandchildren that we were there.

Looking back, I can say that I was there when the first sod was cut and we were all talking about our 'Field of Dreams'. Now that dream has been lifted off the architect's drawing board and is a reality.



Colin Todd and coach, Phil Brown, concentrate on the Reebok action.

I cannot begin to explain how everyone in the dressing room felt on that first night, September 1st 1997, as we prepared for the game against Everton. Not only were we back in the Premier League, we had been provided with home surroundings that have to be the envy of just about every other club. Credit for that must go to the Chairman and his board of directors who have lived with the Stadium concept for something like ten years and more.

What their foresight has given me as a manager is a Stadium that is attractive to footballers. Players want to come and play at The Reebok as evidenced by the quality signings I have been able to make during the close and early part of this season. That can only be good for Bolton football in the long term.

We have been provided with an excellent playing surface that suits the type of passing game we like to play. I spent several seasons playing on the mud that used to be The Baseball Ground in Derby. I do not need to tell you how I feel about the importance of a good pitch.

We also have a Stadium constructed to FIFA and UEFA recommendations so everything at The Reebok meets with the full approval of football's governing bodies. From the excellent dressing room accommodation, with home and away warm-up areas attached, to the separate tunnels by which the teams enter the arena, all the facilities are top quality.

It took some getting used to at first and the opening two or three games were a bit like playing away from home, but we have adapted. The atmosphere generated by the supporters has helped in that respect. The way the Stadium is constructed keeps the sound inside the arena and believe me the players know when the fans get behind them. It is a terrific sensation.

Over the coming months and years the Reebok Stadium will host pop concerts, conferences and exhibitions as the management seek to maximise the facilities available.

But football is what Bolton Wanderers is primarily concerned with and, having been given a superb stage on which to perform, we will all be going flat out to achieve the success we all want.

Colin Todd



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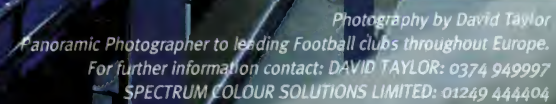
Bolton Wanderers Football club 1997/8 Season

Back Row L-R: Nicky Spooner, John Sheridan, Per Frandsen, Andy Todd, Neil Cox, Keith Branagan, Matthew Glennon, Gavin Ward, Nathan Blake, Scott Taylor, Simon Coleman, Alan Thompson.

Middle Row L-R: Ewan Simpson (physio), Stephen McAnespie, John McGinlay, Chris Fairclough, Gerry Taggart, Hasney Aljofree, Mark Fish, Greg Strong, Stuart Whitehead, Martin Doherty, Lee Potter, Peter Beardsley, Scott Sellers, Colin Dyson (kitman)

Front Row L-R: Steve Carroll (coach), Michael Johansen, Amar Gunnlaugsson, Gudni Bergsson, Colin Todd, Jamie Pollock, Dean Holdsworth, Jimmy Phillips, Phil Brown (coach), Missing: Robbie Elliott, Mike Whitlow







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The turning of the year saw the project reach a stage of construction which signified that even after six months of hard work, the site team had made commendable progress. The next eight months of the project would always be the most crucial of the project, but in more ways than one the foundations for completion had already been laid.

There was still a considerable amount of design work to be completed and with it the final interiors scheme for the by now fully subscribed executive areas. The period was to draw on the resources and character of all the site team and the completion would require a display of effort and resilience from all involved.

Over the next eight months the project would test many of the strong willed and would effect the lives of all those committed to the scheme. The Stadium would be responsible for many a late night and weekend, and with it would put a strain on the home lives of the team. Of course the effort would be rewarded by the ultimate completion but the time lost with families would be lost forever.

The project entered a phase of focusing on the buildings external appearance; cladding, brickwork/blockwork and roofing. In the same stage the roof steelwork became fully positioned and the huge steel masts that would site the stadiums floodlighting would be positioned.

Contracting can be fraught with problems and to say the project was devoid of any would not give the credit to the site staff who dealt with each and everyone. The magnitude of the co-ordination of tasks and the requirement to ensure activities were completed by due dates required a high level of management skills. Sometimes management is not always about how well you can plan and organise, but it is also how best to deal with one off instances as and when they arrive.

Site motivation was kept to as high a level as possible with continued visits to the local taverns and regular five a side tournaments. Our performances varied in quality terms but on occasion Colin Todd may have had the opportunity to view some new talent. Apparently, Colin could not manage to observe our Monday night efforts as he was then preoccupied with the talents of a former England World Cup star playing in the North East of England.



The steelwork starts to span the corners.

Props hold up the roof



Over the next eight months the project would test many of the strong willed and would affect the lives of all those committed to the scheme



The first piece of the exposed roof steel work arrives on site.



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Watson's Steel - Project Manager Watson Steel

The opening of the new Reebok Stadium at the start of the 1997 season marked an important milestone in the history of the Club and its association with Watson Steel.

Bolton Wanderers are of course a founding member of the football league and have been established in the town for over a hundred years. Watson's started life in 1933 as Robert Watson & Company (Constructional Engineers) Limited and became part of the newly formed construction group AMEC in 1982, after previously merging with Fairclough Civil Engineering in 1979.

Watson Steel Limited is now one of the largest structural steelwork companies in the U.K. and has a reputation for innovative engineering and high quality structures.

Apart from the recent involvement on the Reebok Stadium, Watsons have carried out major contracts recently in France, Japan and Hong Kong. The skills of the workforce, mostly Bolton Wanderers fans, have been sold strongly to clients at home and abroad, and the reputation of the town remains high in no small part as a result of this.

Watson's involvement with the Club extends back many years, from the establishment of their first works in the town in the 1930's. The new Reebok Stadium represents the fruition of this longstanding relationship, but Watsons have also been involved in construction work at the Burnden Park ground since the 1950's.

The main floodlight towers were designed and built by Robert Watson & Company Limited in 1956 and some of the engineers who worked on that project are still with Watson Steel.

A notable feature of the new stadium is the emphasis placed on spectator comfort and the refusal of the Club to compromise at the expense of their fans. The oval profile is dictated by the requirement to place no spectator further than 90m from the centre spot. This resulted in a 2 tier structure extending backwards, reducing to a short single tier at the corners to minimise the viewing distances. No columns were allowed within the seating areas and this resulted in the clear spanning shell-like roof shapes. The structural form required to support such a roof was particularly complex.

A decision was made to take Watson Steel Limited on board as part of the design team, working with the Club and their appointed Architects, Lobb plus Civil Engineering Design Consultants, Deakin, Callard & Partners. This decision was taken on the basis of preliminary design and pricing work carried out by Watsons with regard to the roof structure, in conjunction with the Architect and the Club. The requirement for clean lines meant that a fully site welded roof structure was essential and the skills necessary to achieve this were available across the road at Watson Steel.

Apart from the 2000 tonnes of tubular steel in the roof, there are 3000 tonnes of conventional steelwork in the terracing, and this package of work was won by Watson Steel in open competition.

Watson's eventual contract of £7 million for the design and construction of all structural steelwork represents approximately 25% of its overall value. The main contract was awarded to Birse Construction Limited and Watson Steel Limited were then employed by Birse as a nominated sub-contractor.

It is worth considering how the roof structure works; the geometry of the stadium is on an elliptical footprint which leads to a curved roof profile, reducing to the corners as the height of terracing reduces.

The structural solution of the roof works with the geometry by using inclined place trusses, springing from supports outside the corners. The orientation of the truss, when transposed onto the curved roof surface ensures it is positioned towards the front edge for most of its length, thus optimising the roof loading between the truss and the rear columns.

The intersection of the trusses at the corners results in the large pylon structures which transfer all the roof loading down to ground. Whilst the structure resembles a suspension bridge, most of the load is carried by the bottom boom of the trusses acting as an arch between the lower raking pylon members. This results in horizontal forces at the thrust blocks at ground level of over 1000 tonnes.

The 600mm diameter x 40mm thick top boom does carry a proportion of the load and this causes large tension forces in the upper pylon legs. Because the truss is inclined there is a tendency for the top boom to fall towards the pitch. This is prevented by 50mm tie bars splaying out to the roof beams lower down.

The corner pylons are over 50m high and formed from tubes 1000mm diameter x 35mm thick. The thickness increases to 90mm at the connection to the intersecting bottom booms where forces of up to 2000 tonnes must be catered for.

Construction required the roof steelwork to be temporarily propped off the lower stands until the roof girders were welded up. At that point the roof was de-jacked in a controlled sequence to transfer the load from the props into the main girders. This process involved lowering the roof by 300mm - a figure predicted by calculation and achieved on site.

The stadium is a landmark structure and thought to be unique in the solution used to support the roof. Its striking appearance is much admired and, as well as its role as a stadium, it acts as a magnet in attracting business to the area.

There is no doubt that the relationship between Bolton Wanderers Football Club and Watson Steel Limited has helped greatly in ensuring the success of this prestigious project.



Floodlight tower ready for take off.

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BWFC Match Day Sponsorships - More than just Football

Terry Holland
Commercial Manager BWFC



Terry Holland, Commercial manager

Undoubtedly the Reebok Stadium is the finest in the United Kingdom and is the home of the famous Bolton Wanderers Football Club one of the founder members of the football league a club that has always been at the forefront of change.

As we enter the 21st century we have the ideal setting for football business and pleasure.

The Reebok is the perfect venue for watching Britain's number one sport.

Here at Bolton Wanderers you will find a professional and dedicated commercial team at your service that can provide you with a full range of packages tailor made to suit all requirements.

In today's world of commerce sport is big business and for companies wishing to boost their profile the excitement of F.A. Premier League together with the success, Bolton Wanderers have achieved, offers unrivalled possibilities.

The sponsorship opportunities at the Reebok Stadium guarantee your company a high profile, whilst allowing you to combine, business with pleasure by entertaining clients, employees or even family and friends in true executive style.

There are a number of sponsorship opportunities available at Bolton Wanderers each one bringing value for money.

Match Sponsorship

When you sponsor a match at the Reebok your package will include the following:

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- Guided tour of state of the art Reebok Stadium
- Matchday Host/Hostess
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- Silver Service meal with wine (inclusive)
- Exclusive match seats in VIP area (sorry no smoking)
- Half-time refreshments / Full-time refreshments
- Public address acknowledgement
- Electronic scoreboard acknowledgement
- In-house television acknowledgement
- Perimeter board Match Sponsor acknowledgement
- Full colour - Half page advertisement in Matchday programme
- Complimentary Matchday programme and Matchday gift

In addition you will be able to chat to the Legendary Nat Lofthouse O.B.E. also in attendance we have our ex captain and team colleague of Nat's Roy Hartle along with ex Wanderer Peter Nicholson.

Matches at the Reebok are graded depending on the opposing team please refer to the fixture list for individual match grades.

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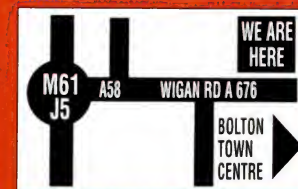
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- Half-time refreshments/ Full-time refreshments
- Presentation of signed football
- Acknowledgement in the Matchday Programme and Scoreboard
- Complimentary Matchday programme and Matchday gift

After the game Nat Lofthouse and Roy Hartle will present you with the signed Matchball as a memento of your day at the Reebok.

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The new re-styled Bolton Wanderers match day programme is excellent value for money for any company using it to relate their message to the public at large, with an average sale of 10,000 programmes per game. This has got to be value for money.

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Player Sponsorship

Have your company name or individual name associated with one of our Players in the Matchday Programme for the season. An ideal way to promote your business and also to have the opportunity to meet your sponsored player with commemorative gift and photo to mark the occasion.

Perimeter Advertising

Perimeter advertising is one of the most dynamic and cost effective forms of advertising today, not only is ground side advertising seen by the supporters within the Stadium but with the Wanderers extensive media coverage this means that your message could be seen in local, regional, and national newspapers as well as on national television. **Put your name in front of them.**

We have positions available around the perimeter of the playing surface as well as positions on the stand fascias.

Sportsmans Dinner

During the season Bolton Wanderers will be holding a number of their very popular and extremely entertaining sporting dinners over the years these have proved highly successful evenings with top speakers from the sporting and entertainment world.

Along with our own Nat Lofthouse O.B.E. and other celebrities from all walks of life. It is an evening not to be missed The Platinum Suite here at the Reebok can provide dinners for up to 350 guests in excellent surroundings.

Golf Day

The Bolton Wanderers golf day is highly popular and sought after by companies. The day includes a stableford competition, which includes teams of four with one being a Bolton Wanderers player. These are played on one of our local 18 hole golf courses coupled with mini competitions throughout the day followed in the evening by dinner, prize presentation and entertainment by top speakers from the world of sport and entertainment.

The Reebok

Our facilities at the Reebok are unrivalled anywhere in the country. Don't miss out on the opportunity to sample all that is best of Bolton Wanderers. We can accommodate groups large and small and adjust our packages to suit your individual needs and requirements.

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BWFC Match Day Membership Clubs

Nigel Ball
Marketing Manager BWFC



On matchdays the main Banqueting Suites at the Stadium offer excellent hospitality facilities for the two membership clubs available to the clubs corporate supporters.

The Platinum Club

The Platinum Club based in The Platinum Suite in the West Stand replaced the Executive Club facility at Burnden Park. It has proved to be popular both amongst individual supporters and companies who require a corporate hospitality facility. Members enter the Stadium via the main entrance with its impressive reception area with stairways or lifts providing access to level 2. A pre match buffet meal is set out in the Piazza Bar adjoining the luxurious Platinum Suite which enjoys an excellent view of the pitch and Stadium. Centrally situated cushioned match seating is reserved for members in either the lower tier or at the front of the upper tier. There is a pay bar facility and refreshment is provided at half time. Window tables linked with prestigious balcony seating are separately marketed as part of a VIP matchday package for companies wishing to entertain guests at the Stadium.

The Lion of Vienna Club

In designing the layout for the Nat Lofthouse (East) Stand the Club decided to incorporate another large Banqueting Suite overlooking the pitch. As well as being a superb Conference and Banqueting facility the Suite is used as a base for a new membership club created for supporters. The concept was to create an informal club facility where members could relax and enjoy a drink before and after the match. The Suite was designed in a modern style incorporating split floor levels, an impressive bar and various dining areas. Additional fittings include a bank of televisions, a large screen television and central bistro style area also suitable for use as a dance floor. The Club decided to name the new facility after the club president, Nat Lofthouse OBE who became known as 'The Lion of Vienna' following his performance for England in Austria. Whilst all Wanderers supporters are aware that the name relates to Nat Lofthouse, many younger supporters may not be aware of the story behind the performance which earned Nat the title 'The Lion of Vienna'.



The Platinum Suite.



*Right:
The Lion of Vienna Suite.*



The name originates from an Austria v England game in May 1952. Nat scored England's first goal in an exciting match which was 2-2 with minutes to go. The ball was slipped through to Nat who thundered upfield in the Austrian half. The goalkeeper came racing forward and it was clear that he was going to clobber Nat. Fearless Lofthouse stayed until the last second to score with a typical power shot. Then crash! In went the ball but out went Nat. Trainers rushed on to stretcher Nat off the field. At the touchline the bold Nat leapt off the stretcher to play out the last five minutes. Match over and the khaki-clad British troops, in their hundreds, poured onto the pitch to carry off the red shirted English. Desmond Hackett a sports journalist covering the game penned the description of Nat as 'The Lion of Vienna'.

Nat was delighted to have the new membership club named after him and proved to be of great assistance in promoting the facility to Wanderers supporters. Infact the lion presented to Nat many years earlier in recognition of his performance for England was used in publicity material and Nat presented members with an autographed framed photograph upon them joining the club.



Another Premier Team

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Middlebrook Exhibition Centre

Nigel Ball
Marketing Manager BWFC



To take advantage of the excellent strategic location of the Stadium it was decided to incorporate a purpose built Sports and Exhibition Centre within the design.

The Middlebrook Exhibition Centre is located in the Nat Lofthouse (East) Stand and provides a total of around 35,000 sq. ft. of space on two levels. A landscaped band stand with spiral staircase provides easy and immediate access from the adjoining Middlebrook Leisure areas.

The Centre doubles as a Sports Hall, and 55% of the occupancy periods are directed to sports participation activities.

This will ensure that in addition to providing an excellent facility for Exhibitions the Centre will also be used for sports and leisure purposes to the benefit of the local community.

The Exhibition Centre will complement the superb Conference and Banqueting facilities available at the Stadium and ensure that the venue becomes a Conference and Exhibition Centre of regional and national significance.

The Centre has an imposing glazed frontage with public entranceways to either side and also incorporates two vehicular entrance doors for easy loading/unloading of equipment and displays. Each entrance lobby has a lift for access to the first floor in addition to the public stairways.



Middlebrook Exhibition Centre



The BBC Antique Roadshow event.



Hugh Scully with the 1923 Cup Final photograph.

The ground floor area totals approximately 20,000 sq ft and can be linked to the adjoining concourse which provides a further 12,000 sq ft of space served by two catering concessions and additional toilet facilities.

Additional space in the Conference/Banqueting Suites immediately above the centre can also be utilised if required.

The Centre is ideal for public or trade exhibitions, product launches, fayres, shows, conference use or can be hired for sports such as basketball or netball.

The opening event in the Exhibition Centre was the BBC Antiques Roadshow which took place in November 1997 and proved to be a tremendous success attracting over 2,000 visitors.

The superb location of the venue combined with the fact that the Stadium has over 2,750 car spaces will ensure that many other successful events are to follow. Coupled with new local bus routes to the adjoining Middlebrook Leisure Area, not to mention the pending near by Rail Halt



Concrete Floors



Concrete pumped up to floor 3.

The huge precast concrete terraces provided a shelter from the prevailing winds and rain as their progression continued into the upper floors of the south stand

By February it was finally starting to look like a stadium. Thousands of tons of concrete were pumped up to form the five floor levels that would eventually form the bowl. The Club had always insisted that internal access should be available on all five levels making the stadium quite unique compared to other stadia built as four individual stands. A real buzz went around the site when the massive floodlight masts started to arrive on site, we all knew they would be big but the sheer size and weight of these masts took your breath away.



The North-East corner awaits completion.

The steel frame construction began to span to the corners where the huge concrete foundations were reaching completion

Mast foundation complete.





The steel framework of the masts.

There is hardly anything in the world that some men cannot make a little worse and sell a little cheaper, and the people who consider price only are this mans lawful prey.

When John Ruskin, the English philosopher, made this comment in the nineteenth century he could well have been passing comment on the wave of new football stadiums to be built in the twentieth century.

February 1997 allowed the most cynical of football fans to realise that the Reebok Stadium would not be a cheap functional tin shed as its futuristic design began to take shape.

The steel frame construction began to span to the corners where the huge concrete foundations were reaching completion. It was only a matter of time before the cladding would begin to close in around the frame to form the external facade.

Inside the stadium the huge concrete pours that formed the floor slabs on the upper and ground floors continued and neared completion. Power floating continued through the night in readiness to allow blockwork to commence in the lower areas. The huge precast concrete terraces provided a shelter from the prevailing winds and rain as their progression continued into the upper floors of the south stand.

The huge cranes continued to idle around the site positioning the steel into its various and complex locations. A temporary propping installation commenced in the west stand so as to allow the first of the roof members to be positioned. The sight of the roof steelwork being positioned was another milestone in the construction process and with it allowed the commencement of the next crucial operation.



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Designed for Life - Andrew Hobson Design Consultant



Andrew Hobson describes how, ever since the idea of a new Stadium was bounded around the Board Room at Burnden Park, Bolton Wanderers have ensured that experts have guided them all the way in their quest for the perfect home. His previous involvements with Blackburn Rovers, Sampdoria, Bradford National Superdome and Huddersfield, have been of great benefit to the new Reebok Stadium. Retained as the Club's Design Consultant, his experience on areas of Stadium space planning, internal and external architecture, graphics and overall aesthetics, has helped Bolton Wanderers create a tailor-made product. The following brief examples outline the benefits of having a retained Design Consultant on a Stadium project of this scale.

"At the last time of counting, I found 45 Football Clubs in England alone who were contemplating relocation. Talking super stadiums and multi-purpose leisure facilities is now big business, and a new industry has grown out of the mixture of disaster and rising popularity of football. Out of all these multi-functional all weather retractable concepts, how many will be able to say "We built the master plan and nothing less".

Bolton Wanderers began talking new stadia 12 years ago. Ironical really, when you consider 11 years later they were given the green light, leaving just 12 months for completion.

My involvement began in November 1995 when I visited Bolton Wanderers to chat about their early proposals and give opinions on areas of the proposed super stadium. The Club explained how this particular facility must in no way be watered down as other grand schemes had suffered in the past. Bolton Wanderers were one of the great founder members of the Football League. They had experienced lean times in the not too distant past, but now, with the team back on its feet, the Club could look forward to Premier League football in what had to be a premier class stadium.

We agreed that nothing less than 100% commitment over the next two years would give us the result we wanted, to secure a home for Bolton Wanderers that would be the envy of the sporting world. On the 24th November 1995, I joined Bolton Wanderers Project Development Team as the Club's retained Design Consultant. The ideas we had earlier talked about had now become our ultimate goal. I had become part of the Football Club and would do everything I possibly could to see the wishes of the Club brought to fruition.

Like many other stadia, the Bolton Wanderers Reebok Stadium was first and foremost designed as a people container. But unlike many of its predecessors, which would close for business at the end of a football match (and stay closed for the next fortnight) our new venue needed to 'contain people' for far more events than sport.

Another major design change from older Stadiums sat the Stadium on an 'oval' footprint in stark contrast to the 'oblong' design when four shoe box stands are built around an oblong pitch.

Although the initial design for the Stadium had four separate stands, from the location of the Stadium and the simple fact of aesthetics, it was decided we must fill in the corners and have a complete bowl around the lower tier. A visit to the Stadium on match day would affirm the unrivalled atmospheric acoustics and crowd noise amplification the design of the fully enclosed Stadium generates.

The exterior of the Stadium looks stunning with its sweeping curves, continuous external glazing bands, and four diamond tipped roof supports, giving extra balance to the roof as it floats above the stands. From the inside, with its Executive Suites, Platinum Club, Hall of Fame, Lion of Vienna Club, to name but a few, to the main Reception, more reminiscent of a luxury hotel than a Football Stadium, you just know the Stadium has thought in design and attention to detail.

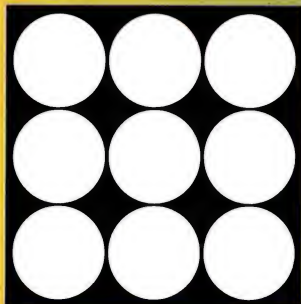
However, those are the obvious things everyone sees, but what about the other things, the operational areas, Offices, changing areas, kick-about rooms, Police Control Rooms and the TV gantry. These areas, although not quite so glamorous, are the engine rooms of every Stadium. Link this with the facility to generate more income in areas not yet developed, and the word 'multi-use' really comes into being.

The fabulous Exhibition Hall, giving 35,000 sq. ft. of unrestricted space, with an upper mezzanine balcony area, is again another unique feature of the complex. Suitable for anything from exhibitions and concerts to 5-a-side and major indoor sporting events.

The multitude of internal facilities within the Stadium, confirms my own feelings on the design of new stadia. The fact that the building has a grassed area and a number of spectator facilities, usually in the Centre, should not detract from the facilities that must be catered for under the stands.

Not all Stadium Design Consultants are of the same opinion, but the design of this Stadium should ensure Bolton Wanderers are less reliant on direct football money alone, and can attract prestigious events and outside investment easier than most, due to a little more design input throughout the project."

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Reebok Stadium

Dressing Rooms - Andrew Hobson Design Consultant

Like many other aspects of the Stadium, the dressing rooms, players and officials facilities are of a standard never seen before in British stadia. The latest FIFA and UEFA guidelines require four specific requirements all of which are included within the Reebok Stadium design.

1. Dressing Rooms

Both the home and away dressing rooms need to be identical. Gone are the days when the home changing room was immaculate with marble walls and the visitors were offered little more than a storeroom.

Gone also is the large 'plunge' bath evident at old stadiums.

At the Reebok players have the option of showers or individual slipper baths. Although the dressing rooms are of a basic design they are both spacious and comfortable.

2. Warm Up Room

The latest guidelines also require a 'kick about area' or warm up room, within the dressing room area. Again these facilities are included at the Reebok measuring 50 sq. metres. The home team dressing room links into the warm up area which directly leads to the physiotherapy room and doctors office.

These areas are also linked into the assistant managers office, trainers office and managers office. The manager also has private showers and changing facilities.

3. Separate 'Run Out Tunnels'

The Stadium design also features separate 'run out tunnels' for both the home and visiting teams. The origin of this requirement is thought to be the need to eliminate any confrontation between the players as they leave the field of play.

4. Female Officials Room

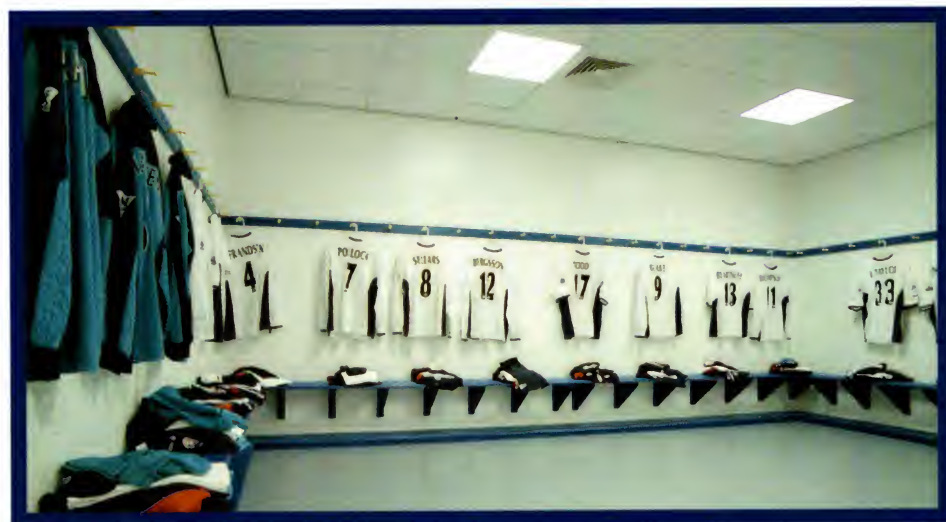
How long will it be before we see the first female referee take control of a Premier League game?

Probably not as long as we think. Any new Stadium built for the next century needs to provide separate changing facilities for female officials and again these facilities are included at the Reebok.

Other points to note:

- Around the playing surface you will find a red 'tartan' track, similar to the surfaces used for athletics. This not only provides a superb training area for players but the surface also helps keep the seats clean as it is dust free.
- The Reebok Stadium also has a drugs testing room and T.V. Interview Room alongside the players changing facilities. Press interview room and press facilities are on level three.

The players dressing room.



The Reebok Stadium's physiotherapy facilities are some of the best in the country

The red 'tartan' track, similar to the surfaces used for athletics.





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The success on the field coincided with the club investing in a computerised ticketing system. This saw the demise of the archaic P.C. and brought in an efficient mechanised process for selling tickets. People could now look on the monitor and select an available seat and within a couple of seconds the ticket was in their hands. This new method got rid of the need to print tickets in bulk. This proved valuable in terms of time and wastage.

Photograph: Ian Lawson



Ticketing plays an extremely important part in the administration of modern day football. Not only does a ticket admit you into the Stadium it also ensures that you have a reserved seat.

With the Reebok Stadium being all-seater, every seat has to be registered on the clubs computer system. This is to ensure that every seat can be accounted for; and when games are sold out the club cannot sell tickets and exceed the capacity. A similar control was applicable at Burnden Park for several seasons, where local safety authorities strictly monitored standing capacity.

After the tragic accident at Hillsborough, the call for stern safety procedures was heard. Before the disaster, ground regulations were somewhat basic. All-ticket matches were very infrequent and terraces were always crammed at very popular matches. The vast majority of fans paid at the turnstiles to stand up, leaving only a few using tickets to sit down in allocated seats. The attendance was totalled by calculating the clock-counter system on the turnstiles and by adding up the ticket stubs from ticket-only stiles. Using this method it was impossible to regulate how many people were being admitted at any given time leading up to kick-off.

The number of season ticket holders grew as the football team climbed up the leagues. Fortunately, the new ticketing system catered for this. Every season ticket holder had an individual file whereby certain information was available to the operator. Such as their seat number and address. Renewing season tickets at the start of the new season was never as simple. Gone were the days when you had to re-write the data into a brand new book. All that was required now was a simple press of a button and the information was automatically transferred. You can imagine how this dramatically reduced the queuing time. The storage capacity for the new system was put to its strongest test in 1995/96 season when the Wanderers were promoted to the Premier League. A staggering 15,000 people invested their cash into purchasing season tickets - a two fold increase on the previous year.

The rise in the number of spectators who bought season tickets meant that tickets available to the general public were in short supply. For glamorous fixtures, lengthy queues were a common sight in and around Burnden Park. Most games in the Premier League became all-ticket.

With the closure of Burnden Park looming, the club decided to issue a special edition, commemorative ticket for the final game against Charlton Athletic. This ticket was designed by the ticket office and produced by an external company.

The move to the Reebok Stadium proved an administrative headache for all the staff at Burnden. Due to a very strict time scale, the ticket office staff had to sell season tickets, even before the seats were physically in place. This was problematic in the sense that the fans could not view their seat before they bought them. The ticket office staff had to individually create a ticket map onto the main computer system by using architects plans.

After the first ever game at the brand new stadium, it became apparent that some season ticket holders had bought seats that did not actually exist. This brought anxiety to both parties. Eventually, when the dust settled, fans were relocated.

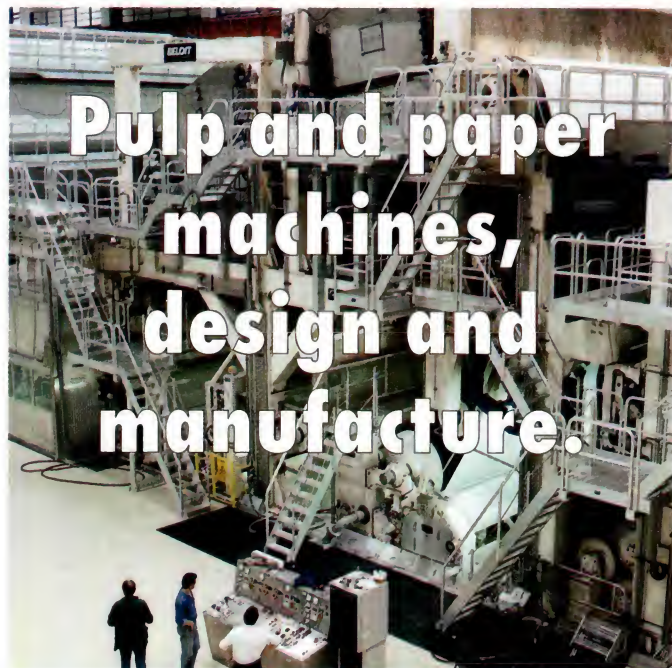
With technology spiralling the future looks extremely promising for the football fan. At some stage it should be possible to buy a ticket in the same way you withdraw money from a cash-till. It is just around the corner.





BOLTON WANDERERS.1 NEWCASTLE.0
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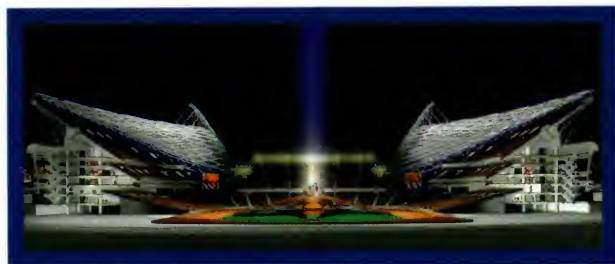


Stadium Design - LOBB Sports Architecture



Rod Sheard
Chairman, Lobb Sports Architecture

Sydney, Australia.



Sydney, Australia.



Brief

The clients aspirations were for a football Stadium which primarily could offer superior viewing, comfort and safety standards to all spectators and one which could also make an architectural statement to help give the club the profile and identity it desired. It also needed to be multi-functional, using its many planned facilities for other than football use. The Stadium had to accommodate restaurants, shops, conference facilities, exhibition spaces, a nursery and medical facilities. The Local Authority were supportive of the concept of a new Stadium and desired an indoor community sports facility to form part of the venue, preferably built into the actual stands. This hall needed to be large enough to be used for exhibitions and shows but also indoor sports such as netball and basketball.

Site

LOBB Sports Architecture were first involved in the project in 1994 after the club had been considering a new venue for some time and had entered into discussions with the local council in order to identify an appropriate site. A site near Horwich on the outskirts of Bolton was identified which benefited from close proximity to junction 6 of the M61 motorway, giving it good road links to Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds via the M62, Preston and the North from the M6. Plans were also put in place for a new railway station to be added to the railway line which runs close to the site.

A key factor in the council support of the development was the promise of up to 3,000 new permanent jobs the development would bring to the area in addition to the tangible financial benefits of a huge construction project and the temporary employment that brought.

The design has taken its place in a comprehensive development, known as Middlebrook, being an overall 200 acre site, occupying the most prominent, road frontage location as the flagship building. It is also physically linked to the adjoining leisure building offering an extensive network of leisure related facilities.

On the 1st September 1997 the Reebok Stadium hosted its first football match. The Stadium, a new home for Bolton Wanderers Football Club, opened its doors to a capacity 25,000 all ticket crowd and, via Sky TV, a far larger remote audience around the world. This is the essence, the function of the modern Stadium, leisure and entertainment centres to the live audience who have taken the trouble to attend and a television studio to that remote electronic audience who may be enjoying the same event from anywhere on earth where television is broadcast. The Reebok Stadium is a global building and its influence extends far beyond the M61 from which it appears in the distance as some futuristic disc inviting spectators to enter. The Bolton v Everton match was not great sport but the event itself can never be relied upon to entertain, that is why the new breed of stadia the Reebok Stadium represents is focused on providing a level of entertainment value far beyond its predecessors. The building is about providing a comfortable, entertaining and safe environment for thousands of people for several hours at a time. The following day after the opening match the national press was full of compliments for the Club's ambition on its return to the top of English football, the Premier League and particularly for the vision embodied in the design of its new Stadium. Bolton Wanderers had been looking to move from their 102 year old home at Burnden Park for a number of years. Burnden Park was Bolton's second home after Pike's Lane from where they were one of the twelve founding members of the first football league in 1888. Burnden Park had a colourful history, suffering one of football's saddest occasions when on 9th March 1946, a total of 33 people died at the Railway End due to crushing.



Melbourne, Australia.

Design Concept

The design of the Stadium represents an incremental advance on LOBB's award winning Stadium in Huddersfield. The client had visited this venue and recognised the exciting style of venue they were looking for with the one significant variation of designing the lower tier as a complete and continuous bowl. All seats are under cover and within 90 metres of the centre of the field. They all have 'C' values of 90 mm or more, providing a wonderful clear view of the whole pitch, from every seat. Thanks to the extensive site available the Stadium could have its own, ground level, 25 metre wide pedestrian concourse (the Piazza) surrounding the venue which fulfils several functions. It provides a circulation route between the various entrances; can accommodate external concessions and pre-match entertainment and provides a clearly defined 'place of safety' in case of emergency. To respond to the clients ambitions of achieving a 'landmark' structure LOBB's developed a form of building which visually focused on a dramatic roof over-sailing a simple but articulate oval bowl. The bowl itself would be continuous in a large oval plan form providing constantly changing perspectives from any point of view. The roof

itself was conceived as a series of four leaning tapering tube towers providing support for the pitch floodlighting, and the main roof trusses which spanned to full length of each side. The trusses themselves are curved both top and bottom to reflect the true viewing nature of the bowl below and the natural structural integrity of the structural element. The composition achieves a floating scalloped canopy over the bowl each element fitting neatly to the other and being read as one unified form.

The West stand contains on ground level public areas including the main concourse with its many associated facilities. It is also a service and administration floor containing offices for the club and the stadium management and changing and warm-up facilities for players. Level 1 includes the Chairman's Suite, Boardroom and Directors Guest Lounge. The Wanderers Suite (Players Bar) and office accommodation. A main production kitchen is also situated to the South. Level 2 above accommodates a second concourse, served by dedicated twin sets of scissors stairs and the Stadium's private boxes, and a banqueting suite capable of providing seated dining for 450 people. Level 3 is another public concourse providing access to the upper tier of viewing and level 4 is plant area containing engineering services.

The East stand houses most of the Stadium's community facilities with ground and first floors accommodating the large double height sport and exhibition space. Level 2 is devoted to club and private box holders facilities; the Lion of Vienna Suite; Hall of Fame Suite and Burnden Lounge, which is planned to open in early 1998.

The North stand is the 'home' end of Bolton Wanderers' supporters and backs onto a 3,000 space car park. Ground floor accommodates the public concourse, and it is intended later to house club, retail and and club restaurant while Level 1 is planned for food and beverage areas. Level 2 accommodates a concourse and accommodation overlooking the playing surface that could be let as office space.

The South stand is the 'visitors' end of the ground backing onto its own car park. Internal circulation is similar to that of the North stand and the building can be subdivided into sections to allow for varying numbers of visiting fans. Escape time for all the stands in case of emergency is calculated at below 8 minutes from any seat to a 'place of safety' which is the wide public concourse.

Atmosphere

Emphasis was placed on the Stadium possessing a good 'football atmosphere'. The general perception is that it is up to the players on the pitch to produce exciting football in order to lift the crowd and so create 'atmosphere', but LOBB's specialist knowledge of this building type allows this to assist this process by carefully designing Stadia which generate their own atmosphere. Judging by the crowds reaction since its opening these ideas are clearly working.

It is intended, like most new stadia, that the Reebok will be much more than a football ground used once a fortnight, but will be a leisure complex, centring on the football team, and operate seven days per week. There are extensive facilities 'below' such as the 46 executive boxes, a Banqueting Suite which can seat 450 people, lounges of various sizes around the ground. An unusual feature which is not evident externally is the huge 35,000 square feet of double height exhibition space under the East stand, which has a clear 8 metre ceiling height. General spectator access is gained through turnstiles set in the perimeter wall. In each corner of each stand are two banks of turnstiles and exit gates; one set exclusively serving the lower tier and the other serving the upper tier.

Separate VIP access is available to both the West and East stands' executive areas at level 2. It is intended that the different executive areas can be utilised on a daily basis. In future the Club can consider alternative uses such as office accommodation, themed restaurants; medical and sports injury rehabilitation units to the levels of the North and South stands.

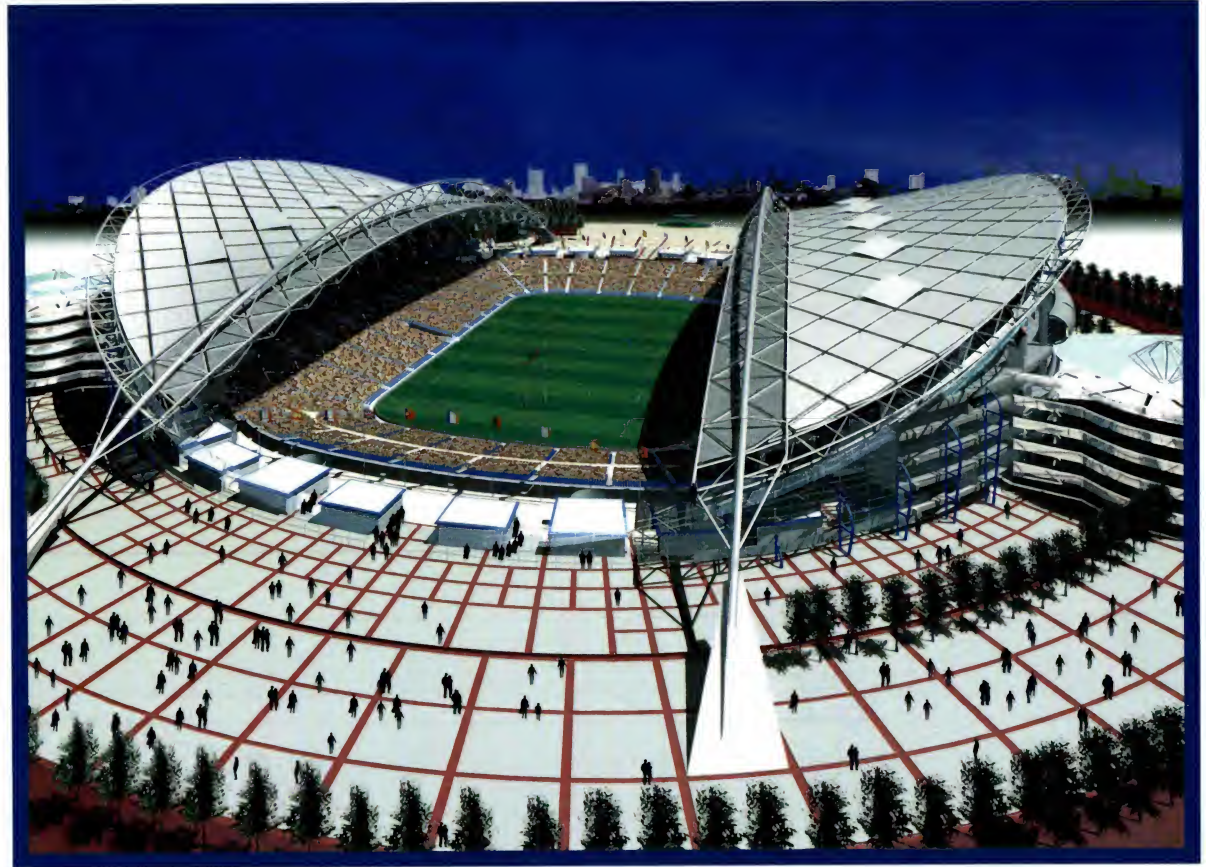
This Reebok Stadium has probably the best circulation of any football stadium in the country. Not only is there excellent vertical circulation but the whole Stadium has uninterrupted service circulation on the lowest three levels but with access available all around at upper concourse level also. For the Stadium operators this makes management so much easier, as they can access all levels at all times without leaving the building. Another unique feature that has probably never been seen before in any Stadium is the twin player tunnels. The intention is for the two teams to be able to enter the field and be introduced individually, so highlighting the sense of theatre and so atmosphere.

Conclusion

The Reebok Stadium is unquestionably a landmark building that has been quickly adopted by Bolton's supporters as their 'spiritual home'. Many have suggested that the Reebok would never have been designed as it was not for the precedent Huddersfield set in the development of their new Stadium, a Stadium which went on to win the coveted award of RIBA Building of the Year in 1995. But to see this new venue in the shadow of Huddersfield would be wrong. The Reebok is strikingly different, bigger and more integrated in its concept providing the extensive facilities required for the modern Premier League Club, it is an assertive, individual statement which stands alone in the history of Stadium development.

There are about five years between LOBB's design for this Stadium and their well known work at Huddersfield and it is interesting to compare the development thought and application between the two buildings. Huddersfield was designed for clubs with fewer financial resources capable of being brought to bear on the project. The Reebok Stadium is therefore a more extensive development and designed to be built in one main phase of work with smaller stages of infill which would not require major structural additions while Huddersfield was designed to be built in four distinct phases because of the limited funds available at its initial inception.

Huddersfield broke the ground for expressive football stadia in the UK, stadia which communicate to their arriving spectators while they are still in their car some distance from the grounds saying 'this is a place of excitement and entertainment, you are going to enjoy yourself here'. The Reebok Stadium is certainly a proud landmark which 'speaks' to its arriving fans with a clear message, a message of progress and success, a message the Bolton Wanderers Football Club clearly envisaged in 1994 when they took the first brave steps to move from their long established home. The extensive flexibility designed into the Stadium reaches their maximum potential together, a future which looks very promising.



Currently Lobb Sports Architecture are working on the new Sydney Stadium in Australia in readiness for the 2,000 olympic games. The illustration on this page shows the next generation at new stadium borne out of The Reebok.



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The floodlight tower nears completion.



the month of
March was of
particular
importance due
to its effect on
the ultimate
scheme

The month of March, as the majority of its predecessors, was a crucial month for the project. The importance and significance of each day, week and month of the project cannot be emphasised enough. All lost time due to weather or the failure to procure the appropriate quality of labour or materials for the project would have to be recovered at a later date.

However, the month of March was of particular importance due to its effect on the ultimate scheme.

The mechanical and electrical installation had commenced in earnest and with it the need to achieve a high level of technical installation with a period of dedicated testing prior to the first game.

On site welding



A landmark building takes shape when viewed from the M61.

The month of March became the month where people began to consider the interiors and the colour scheme required for a stadium that was to function on a seven days a week basis, offering multiple services to its community, the creation of an ambiance and environment capable of satisfying the needs of all was essential.

The stadium's final interior design has achieved this, but the month of March saw many alternatives and variations considered.

This is perhaps the only opportunity to thank all those people who became involved in providing samples and/or sketch designs, without reward, that served only to wet the appetites of the club's representatives.

The majority of samples produced which offered many an alternative are now confined to the stadium's archives, but it was only by their production that the scheme was finalised.

Multiple services to its community, the creation of an ambiance and environment capable of satisfying the needs of all was essential

The massive cranes lift the floodlight masts into position.



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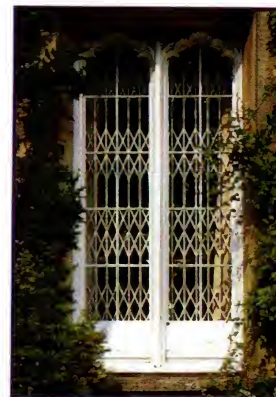
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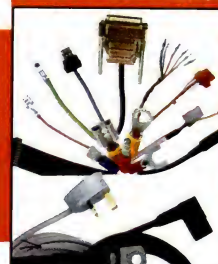
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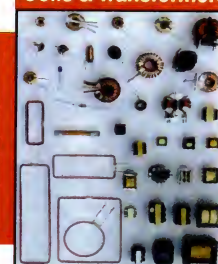
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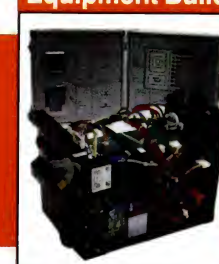
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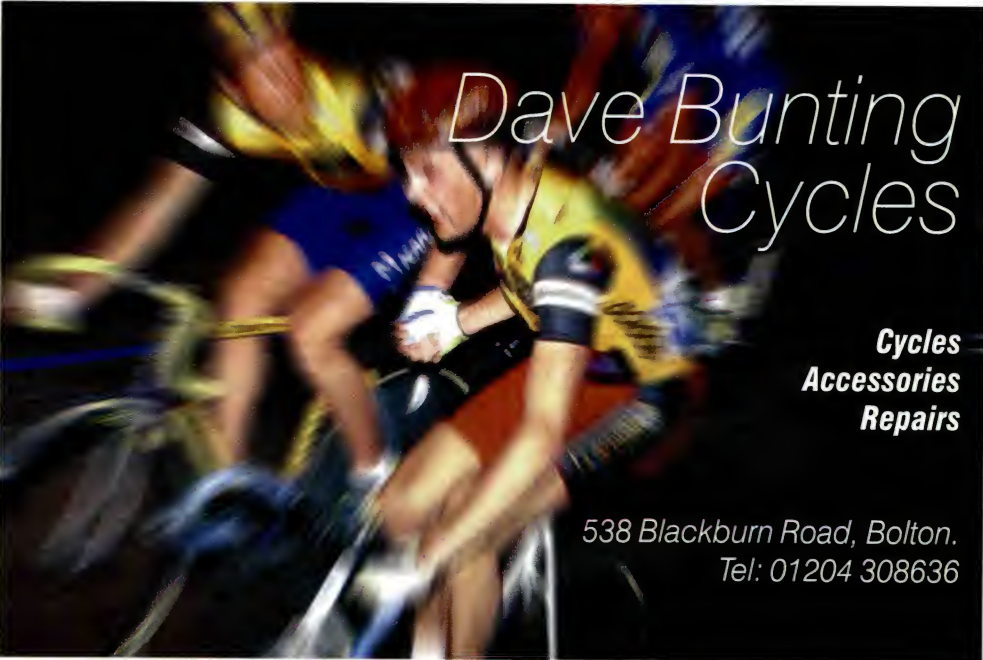
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Bolton Wanderers v Manchester United
Saturday 20th September 1997
Jamie Pollock slightly mistimes a tackle on Nicky Butt.

Photograph: Bolton Evening News



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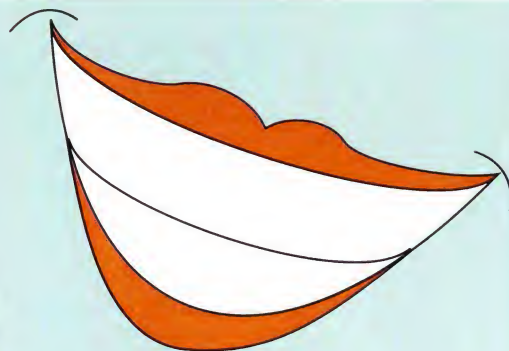
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Paul Fletcher
Chief Executive
Reebok Stadium



The signing.

Very rarely will a new building attract such intense media coverage as a new Football Stadium. Once open the venue will then continue to be mentioned through both Terrestrial and Sky TV channels, radio, newspaper and a variety of other media outlets. This coverage can provide superb exposure for a sponsor and therefore has a great commercial value to the Stadium's owners.

In the early days of stadia naming, a sponsor would attach their name to an existing building. The Fosters Oval, Bass Headingley and Labatts Apollo being good examples of this. Often this sponsorship was part of a pouring rights or exclusive supply contract. Although the sponsors name was associated with the venue, the fact that the Stadium's original name 'The Oval', 'Headingley', 'Apollo' has been established for many years the sponsors name was more based on association.

In more recent times large companies have realised the value of naming a new property which does not carry an established name, for example, The Cellnet Stadium, (Middlesbrough), The Alfred McAlpine Stadium (Huddersfield) and The Nynex Arena (Manchester).

The Nynex Arena naming sponsorship has been a phenomenal success. Nynex are quoted as saying "for a company who require immediate name recognition, branding a rare flagship opportunity works very well". The spin offs experienced by Nynex have been many and varied not least with customer acquisition and retention.

Both the Middlesbrough Stadium and the Huddersfield Stadium had project names (i.e. Riverside Stadium and Kirklees Stadium) which can sometimes cause confusion if a sponsor's name is added later.

At Middlesbrough it is understood that the Football Club asked the fans their views of the Stadium's name, hence the name Riverside Stadium, a name which is used extensively to describe the venue by radio and TV alike. Unfortunately, the sponsors Cellnet often gets omitted from the venues title as the 'Riverside' name is so well established.

The Britannia Stadium at Stoke is a better example of how to establish a name prior to opening; following Stoke City's relocation from their old Victoria Ground.

At Sunderland the Club waited until a few days before opening to make a major announcement at a midnight press conference. Although Sunderland had sought advice from C.S.S., a London based sponsorship agency, it was a surprise to hear their new venue was named 'The Sunderland Stadium of Light'. Their first match programme explained the situation. The Club had decided to acknowledge the miners at Wearmouth Colliery who carried a Davy lamp everyday of their working lives. The Club want their supporters to be in the 'limelight' and a torch illuminates the way forward.

Nevertheless, the programme notes went on to explain 'Should the Club wish to accept such a proposal in the future a sponsors name could be added to the title. The Board have so far resisted adding a sponsors name unlike other new Stadiums, to ensure the Stadium's name is distinctive'.

At Derby County the new Stadium was built on derelict land previously called Pride Park. Again the supporters view was asked and although many fans voted for 'The new Baseball Ground', Pride Park won out in the end. The Club felt that the word 'new' would soon be lost and were looking for a new beginning away from the old Baseball Ground. Only time will tell whether or not Millwall's new Stadium will still be called the 'New Den' in years to come.

In every case of commercial stadia naming, irrespective of cash values and sponsorship exposure, there is always a link, angle or local relationship that cements the relationship.

Scarborough is the headquarters of the company McCain Frozen Foods, who went on to name the Stadium The McCain Stadium. Alfred McAlpines built the Huddersfield Stadium. Britannia Building Society is based in Stoke as are Bass Brewers at Headingley in Leeds.

At Bolton the Reebok relationship was already well established. Right from the very early days of Joe Foster making running shoes in Bolton, and Nat Lofthouse wearing Joe Foster boots at Wembley Cup Finals, up to more recent time when Reebok became shirt sponsors and kit manufacturers.

From the Clubs point of view Reebok was the ideal sponsor to target. A sporting name; a short name; their colours (blue, white and red) were Bolton colours, the second largest leisurewear retailer in the world (second to Nike); a good working relationship was already in existence; Reebok would also use the venue extensively for product launches, photoshoots, sales meetings, exhibitions, and finally the Vice President of Reebok Europe David Singleton is a Bolton Wanderers fan.

In late 1996 Reebok was presented with a proposal which named the Stadium 'Reebok Stadium'. During the development and construction stages Bolton Wanderers had managed to keep 'The Stadium' clean and not give the project a title.

Reebok was presented with an extensive menu of sponsorship opportunities which included such things as external and internal signage, seat name and logos, perimeter signage and a host of corporate matchday facilities.

Four months later on 18th April 1997, one hour before Prime Minister John Major paid an official visit to the new Stadium, Reebok signed a contract to name Bolton's new home Reebok Stadium. A press release announced the agreement as a multi-year, multi-million pound deal, the most lucrative naming rights contract ever signed in the UK.

By the official opening date in early September the new Stadium was well established as The Reebok Stadium often simply 'The Reebok'.

Like most good sponsorships it is a great deal for Bolton Wanderers . . . and a great deal for Reebok.



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Concept to Reality



Jan Kozłowski, BSc (Hons) F.C.I.O.B. BWFC, Project Manager for the Stadium, and subsequently Reebok Stadium Manager.

You will appreciate that the facilities provided at the Reebok Stadium are second to none and that the vision expressed, by the Chairman and the Board, has proved to be extremely successful, not only for Bolton Wanderers but for many other associated parties. This is a brief insight into the commitment given by all parties associated with this particular project, in making it the success it is.

The start of the reality commenced when Bolton Wanderers began to interview for a Main Contractor to undertake the project. After numerous meetings, discussions, costings and evaluations, Birse Construction were selected for the task.

The end date, for the Stadium to be ready for the the 97/98 season, was the focus for all concerned. Each construction activity had to be linked to preceeding and subsequent activities, each had its own

start date, and each had a design, analysis of tender, placement of order and procurement period associated with it. There were hundreds of these activities, many of which were common to each of the stands, i.e. seating, roofing, precast concrete, etc., and others which were individual to a particular area.

Many activities were carried out simultaneously on different areas and, because of the labour resource required in many instances, two, three and even four different sub-contractors ended up having to carry out like-activities. At peak, there were in excess of 600 operatives on site.

However, the construction of the Stadium was not in isolation and many other areas of the development were also taking shape, and the one with the greatest influence was that of the infrastructure, i.e. the roadways associated with the scheme.

As with many construction projects, clients decide to change their mind. Increased facilities have been provided and include the complete fit-out of the Nat Lofthouse Stand on Level 2, the complete fit-out of the main West Stand on Level 1, and the erection of a giant scoreboard in the South East corner, to name but a few. The net result is that over £31 million has been spent on the Stadium to date. There are many facts relating to physical content of the structure and the parameters to which it was designed, and these can be found in the appendices.

At the end of the day, if the ground is not issued with a Safety Certificate, then football cannot be played here. Input was required from many parties (apologies to anyone I have inadvertently omitted):- The Football Licencing Authorities; The Building Control Department of Bolton Metro; The Fire Service/Ambulance Service/St. John's Ambulance & Police; The Contractor and his Design Team, as well as the Club and its safety team.



Within the fabric/structure of the building, facilities must exist to allow safe egress should an emergency occur and these include, but are not limited to, designated escape routes, adequate signage, correct and appropriate levels of emergency lighting, an effective PA system, as well as an automatic fire detection system.

These are known as "essential services", and the design must be such that should a power failure occur, these essential services are maintained to allow safe evacuation. Normally this is done via standby generators; in Reebok's case the design allows for the generators to run during an event, and should one or both fail, then the mains power supply will take over the essential services. Enmeshed with the general Safety Certificate are the contingency plans, developed by Bolton Wanderers, and these includes such items as:- Emergency warning signals. Failure of the automatic fire detection system (either local or total). Power failures before turnstiles open and before kick-off and after kick-off. Failure of the public address system (full or partial, as well as to the same parameters as above). The computerised turnstile counting system and potential failure, as well as the CCTV system amongst others.

Other contingency plans exist, such as those put together by the emergency services, incorporating the fire, police and ambulance services of Greater Manchester. All these activities are co-ordinated via the Ground Control Room situated on Level 2 in the south west corner of the Stadium above the F.H. Brown sign.

To finish off this particular section of the book, I would like to personally thank all those people who made it possible.



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Reebok Stadium



Benefiting our Community



Councillor Frank R White J.P.
Chairman, Burnden Sporting Initiative

It is some 14 years since Bolton Wanderers became football trailblazers with the launch of Football in the Community and the Burnden Sporting Initiative projects.

Football in the Community, launched as a direct result of the Heysel Stadium tragedy, was originally the brainchild of Professional Footballers Association Chief Executive Gordon Taylor and the scheme was administered and funded by the P.F.A. The original intentions were to try and alleviate problems on the terraces by getting the Community involved in football in several ways while, at the same time, providing a six month period of employment for former professional footballers who for whatever reason were unemployed. It is anticipated that the six month period of work experience would give ex-players an opportunity to learn new skills including administrative procedures and sports coaching.

Bolton Wanderers were one of six North West Clubs involved in a trial assessment period which got the Community scheme off the ground.

The move from Burnden Park to the Reebok Stadium brings even more community benefits

Preston North End, Oldham Athletic, Bury, Manchester City and Manchester United joined with Bolton in a pilot scheme that has now spread to 90 Clubs and offers employment skills training opportunities under the Government Training For Work Initiative. No longer funded by the P.F.A., Football in the Community has become a self financing operation that in any one year provides benefits for well over 5,000 youngsters through the Bolton Borough.

Burnden Sporting Initiative also got off the ground in 1986 as a joint venture between Bolton Council and Bolton Wanderers. Its aim were to provide sporting benefits for a wide cross section of the Community within a professional football environment. Financial grants from the Sports Council and The Football Trust enabled extensive work to be carried out enlarging and improving the gymnasium facilities to the rear of Burnden Park.

A new upper floor was constructed to house a group exercise room fully equipped with the very latest exercise machines. The ground floor area was completely modernised with the addition of ladies and gents changing and shower rooms and new flooring in the general training hall to allow badminton to be played.

Outside, a 40 metre square all weather 5-a-side pitch was laid and over the ensuing years the modernised facilities have seen extensive usage.

The Education Department, Social Services (including the Unemployed, Disabled and Probationary Service), Local Youth organisations and Bolton Wanderers own Junior Whites Club have all benefited from the Burnden Sporting Initiative.



Much of the credit for the success of the BSI must go to Bill Longden and his enthusiastic team who have also organised and administered 5-a-side leagues over the years as well as looking after the day to day running of the gymnasium.

As for the future, the Club's move to the Reebok from Burnden Park will bring changes for the better. The substantial facilities at the rear of Burnden will be gifted to the Local Education Authority to be administered for the education and Community purposes in the Burnden area.

The Burnden Sporting Initiative will continue at the Reebok where exciting new proposals include a 35,000 sq. ft. Community Sports Hall in the Stadium's Exhibition Centre, a new Under-Achievers Education Centre to be based within the proposed Visitor Centre, community based indoor and outdoor tennis, a full size running track and training pitches.

Both the Burnden Sporting Initiative and Football in the Community will have every incentive and opportunity to build on the firm base they have established over the past 14 years.

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Reebok Stadium



Transport Strategy



John Walsh O.B.E.
Transport Consultant

In less than six months, Bolton Wanderers now operates the largest number of car parking spaces of any Premier League Club in the country, and provides a unique system of bus services covering the whole of the area

A network of 14 routes ensured that the vast majority of fans had a reasonably local bus service to enable them easily to get to the new Stadium. Discussions with local bus operators took place when the routes were agreed and a flat rate fare of £1 was felt to be the best option to ensure speedy loading.

Although several thousands now travel by bus, the car was always going to be the principal mode of transport. Discussions were held with Police and Local Authority about the car parking strategy and so began another exercise, selling hundreds of tickets for car parks which were still at that time under construction.

Despite the large number of car parking spaces available, Bolton Wanderers recognised that even more would be needed. An offer was made by British Aerospace to open and operate around 1,000 additional spaces, with the proceeds going to charity.

The offer from a local school to provide additional car parking caused some concern to residents, and it was ultimately agreed to restrict the facility to Staff only parking. This was yet another important piece in a complex jigsaw.

The new roadworks around the site, such as Chorley New Road and De Haviland Way, all have cycle lanes. This provides yet another means for fans to travel to matches.

Throughout, the needs of pedestrians have not been overlooked. Footpath links from Chorley New Road to the Stadium were planned; these were not available until more recently but, nonetheless, pedestrian traffic from Horwich has now been satisfied.

Many fans walk from Blackrod and Westhoughton. Again their needs have been accommodated with new footpaths and pedestrian safety rails along De Haviland Way towards the M61 motorway.

In less than six months, Bolton Wanderers now operates the largest number of car parking spaces of any Premier League Club in the country, and provides a unique system of bus services covering the whole of the area. A far cry indeed from the old days!

The move to a new Stadium after more than 100 years of football at Burnden Park was bound to change the habits of a lifetime and Bolton Wanderers recognised that the move to a new Stadium would require a combination of transport arrangements.

As far back as 1995, the Club undertook its first survey of travel needs. A detailed study of the postal addresses of season ticket holders and members, enabled a detailed profile of the geographic spread of regular spectators at Burnden Park to be established. Apart from a small number of fans who were registered at addresses as far apart as Inverness and Plymouth, the vast majority lived within the greater Bolton area. From this profile, it was possible to plan bus routes to cover not just Bolton itself, but also surrounding areas.



14 routes ensure that the vast majority of fans have a reasonably local bus service to enable them to get easily to the new Stadium

A p r i l 97 C l a d d i n g



Pre-formed concrete blocking starts to give the now familiar terracing.



The stadium now moved at a frenzied pace with the construction process preparing to reach its dramatic climax.

Cladding, roofing, blockwork, brickwork, mechanical and electrical installations continued on site and with them the continuing change in the stadium's appearance. It was definitely no longer a building site, it had evolved into a project that was living up to the expectations and high standards set for it. The project now looked like the stadium that so many of its avid followers had discussed during the previous months. Seats began to find their position within their designated stand and with it a lifetime of viewing for their respective user. As season tickets were purchased, prospective spectators were keen to find out the location of their seat. It was a little too early for this yet but I had already commenced my own mission impossible, to test drive every seat in the stadium, (It was a hard job, but somebody had to do it).

Before you begin to think that us on a site have nothing better to do all day, I never achieved my mission.

However, having viewed the pitch from such obscure angles as the west stand roof and the floodlight masts, I settled for my favourite resting place, the front row of the upper level of the west stand-right on the half way line.

Meanwhile, back at the pitch level the former Prime Minister, Mr John Major had arrived on site. In the month ahead I am sure that this was one of Mr Major's better days, meeting Nat Lofthouse, Colin Todd, and being given the honour of walking on the hallowed turf. I am sure Mr Major enjoyed the opportunity to put into place the first floodlight diamond on top of the floodlight mast at the South East corner of the Stadium. His handling of the crane was quite superb!

The floodlights had arrived and glazing units were being installed with the cladding panels. The pitch remained in good condition in the early spring sun and with it a premier team stadium taking shape.

Left: The teams colours are clad onto East Stand.

The pitch remained in good condition in the early spring sun and with it a premier team stadium taking shape



The roof starts to take its distinctive shape.



Left: The exposed steelwork to the roof is near completion.

Cladding, roofing, blockwork, brickwork, mechanical and electrical installations continued on site and with them the continuing change in the stadium's appearance

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Better by Far - By Paul Fletcher Chief Executive Reebok Stadium

Almost a decade has now passed since the football disasters of the late 1980's forced the Government to have an inquiry into the state of the Nations professional Stadia.

Looking back, the Taylor Report has been a great success. This study, linked to grant funding from the Football Trust has allowed Clubs to provide safe, comfortable Stadiums for their spectators, without risking their league position. This last point is quite an important one. Prior to the Taylor Report and the obligations that spectators had to be seated, most Clubs were more likely to spend money on players than on their Stadium's facilities.

The old Burnley Chairman, Bob Lord, thought he was a visionary who could break the mould. He rebuilt the old Turf Moor Stadium in the early 1970's. This put the Club in such financial difficulties that once the youth policy dried up around 1978 and players could not be sold to pay off the debts, the Club slid down to the bottom of the Fourth Division and almost out of the Football League.

Following the Taylor Report it is recorded that around 66 Clubs out of the 92 thought relocation (moving ground to a new site) was a better option than redevelopment (refurbishing the current ground). Ten years later, only eleven Clubs have pulled it off.

The early relocations of Scunthorpe, Walsall, Northampton and Chester were pretty straightforward affairs with normally the Club selling their old ground for enough money to build a similar sized Stadium. Then followed a group of more imaginative Stadia with Millwall, Huddersfield and Middlesbrough, each looking to build something more than just a Stadium for football.

The latest wave of Stadia involving Derby, Sunderland, Stoke and of course Bolton will become the best and possibly the last this century and bring the Taylor Report to a successful conclusion.

Since I visited the Toronto Sky Dome in 1990, I have been involved in new Stadia development, and in my opinion the Reebok Stadium is by far the best in this country in almost every aspect.

Probably it would have proved an easier and cheaper option to cram 40,000 seats into a traditional 'shoe box' design with four independent stands and not much else. But the visionaries on the Board at Bolton Wanderers had a much more businesslike approach and rather than re-inventing the wheel, visited dozens of new Stadiums and new stands to pick up inspirations and learn from early mistakes.

The Reebok Stadium therefore provides some of the finest spectator facilities to be found anywhere in Europe. So on the first visit on the 1st September 1997 Wanderers fans had a few items to look out for.

The Pitch - You will not see much of the £400,000 investment, most of which is below the surface, but a mixture of 70% sand; 30% soil allows superb drainage. The long root, underground heating and sprinkler system could probably take three matches a week.

The Track - Made from similar material to the new Tartan Running Tracks; this 'spring' surface not only provides a quality running track but is also dust free (this keeps the seats a lot cleaner in the lower tier).

Pitch Perimeter Signage - A new system allows vertical advertising to the T.V. cameras (all these are taken by the Premier League for their core sponsors) measuring 2' x 20" with the reverse an angled board pointing to spectators (do not miss the important 'Don't go on the pitch' and 'Let's kick racism out of football' messages).

The Goal Posts - I am sure the serious football spectators will not miss the new posts and nets. Without doubt the best nets for seeing the ball hit the net, ala Euro 96!

The Seats - are a traditional moulded plastic but the 'steppings' (the distance between each row of seats) provide the most generous in British Football at 800 mm over 2' 6". If you do not believe me try sitting in the new stand at Elland Road!

The Concourses - 8 spacious concourses, each allowing easy access between seats, toilets and food concessions.

For Disabled - every area of the Stadium has been designed to cater for people with disabilities. The large areas pitchside in front of the Main Stand (home supporters end) and in front of the Bolton Evening News Stand provide easy access for Wanderers fans in wheelchairs. These slightly raised areas also offer a great view within 10 metres of play. Similar facilities are available for away supporters. For Wanderers wheelchair supporters an upper tier viewing position, behind glass is available in the North East Corner with a lift access, kindly sponsored by B.T. There is also a low level counter included at the ticket office. For supporters who have visual impairments a loop system links into the Stadium match broadcast at three front row locations for both home and away supporters, again sponsored by B.T.

Televisions - Over 100 T.V. monitors are scattered around the Stadium showing both the build up to the game (from 1.15 pm onwards) up to kick off time when the match is shown live, so do not be scared to buy a coffee during the match, you will not miss any goals.

The Concessions (Kiosks) - Operated by Gardner Merchant as part of their Stadium Catering Contract provide a good selection of food and refreshments. Fifteen of the concessions also offer beers and lagers - which of course must not be consumed in view of the pitch - and I know the John Smith's and McEwans brands will be very popular.

Statistics show that the most popular football spectators meal is a 'Pie and a Pint' and there will be adequate choice in the 'Mahoney's Kiosks' and 'Fast Eddies' pie bars.

Continued on page 105

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Cont.

Waste Bins - Are banned from most Football Stadiums but please use the plastic containers for all your waste paper and plastic glasses.

Electronic Scoreboard - or Video Screens as they are now called are located in the South East corner of the Stadium between the Nat Lofthouse Stand sponsored by Matthew Browns and the Visitors South Stand (yet to be named). Scoreboards have moved quickly from black and white bulb technology; to colour bulb/computer technology to the Jumbotron - as used at Highbury and White Hart Lane to The Reebok Stadium, which features the very, very latest in L.E.D. technology imported from China via Milan to Bolton. If ever the Premier League will allow video screens to help the referee make decisions we are ready and waiting.

Executive Box and Hospitality Suite Holders - the 46 individual suites, again provide superb facilities which include the three key requirements for companies wanting to entertain guests at matchdays.



Research shows they have:-

1. Comfortable seats outside the suite to allow guests to get the full atmosphere of the game.
2. Good food and service within a spacious suite.
3. Private bars outside the suite to allow box holders to meet (and network) with other suite holders and their guests.

And on top of this, the Reebok Stadium suites offer a few added features which may not be noticeable, but all are very important.

- Outside the suite a 7' drop to spectator seating stops spectators turning around to look into the suite to see the action replay of the goal, shown on the T.V. inside the suite. This causes serious problems at other new stadia.
- The first tier of seats on the balcony outside the suites are one step below the suite itself. This allows guests to stay in the suite if they wish and get a clear view of the match without being obstructed by guests sitting in the seats outside the suite.
- Each suite has its own waiter/waitress for the day plus a hospitality host/hostess who looks after Suiteholders 'every need' via a call button.
- Each Suite has its own colour T.V. with Sky; Terrestrial and live football channel;
- Each Suite has a fridge and adequate hanging space for coats.
- The four private bars that support the suites are named:-
The Presidents Bar - Main Stand - Presidents Suite.
The Hopkinson Bar - Main Stand - Executive Suites.
The Matthew Brown Bar - Nat Lofthouse Stand - Matthew Brown Suites.
The Foweracre Bar - Nat Lofthouse Stand - Hall of Fame Suites.

It will not just be the last, it will be
better by far than any of its
predecessors by a mile.

*Paul Fletcher, Chief Executive Reebok Stadium
One month prior to opening in September 1997.*

For supporters who have joined the Clubs, again superb facilities will add to a great day out watching Premier League Football.

For Platinum Club Members - a magnificent Banqueting Suite in the main West Stand, centrally located in between the Presidents and Executive Suites, provides an air conditioned buffet lunch in one of the finest settings in the Premier League. Four large bars each within easy reach of the live action T.V. will become the place for after match celebrations or commiserations. For the match, the best cushioned seats in the house are reserved in the upper and lower tiers.

For Lion of Vienna Club Members - similar larger suite in the Nat Lofthouse Stand provides a great facility for fans who may not want to eat at every game. A buffet, or bar snack meal is available as are similar facilities to those in the Platinum Club with central seats for the match in the upper tier of the Nat Lofthouse Stand.

Match Sponsors - are located in a plush suite on level two between the Platinum Club and Presidents Suites. This room can accommodate a minimum of 20 up to a maximum of 50 sponsors guests. Its private bar adjoins the President Bar and is one of eleven independent bars within the Stadium.

The McDonalds Family Enclosure - recently sponsored by fast food giants McDonalds, features the only food concession in the Stadium which does not sell alcohol, this area of around 3,000 seats is serviced by two food concession points (one does sell alcohol) and is located in the upper tier of the Bolton Evening News Stand.

If there were another three pages available I could write about the hundreds of other similar advantages the Reebok Stadium has over other recent Stadiums.

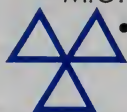
Although Everton are starting to talk about leaving Goodison, I am sure it will not happen this century, if at all, which could leave the Reebok Stadium as the last of the Stadiums which have resulted from the Taylor Report. It will not just be the last, it will be **better by far** than any of its predecessors by a mile.

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Reebok Stadium

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Disabled Facilities



Liam O'Connor
Vice Chairman
BWFC Disabled
Supporters Association



Supporters Association and represent Bolton Wanderers Football Club on the National Committee. Our organisation is officially recognised by the club, and the club always consult and listen when we have strong views on a subject.

It was obviously a great privilege, when we realised that Burnden Park would close, to be involved in helping to design facilities at the new Stadium. In the very early days we met with Director Graham Ball, Chief Executive Des McBain and PR Officer Alan Fullelove who went on to become the President of our Association.

We realised that we were representing not only the current Wanderers fans but also disabled supporters from future generations who would use the Stadium. We needed to get it right.

Even though Burnden Park was almost 100 years old and not designed for wheelchairs or disabled people, from my early days as a supporter, the club was always prepared to listen and provide the best possible facilities whenever possible. I am delighted that this process has continued at the new Reebok where myself and many other disabled fans are able to watch football amongst some of the finest facilities in Europe.

At Burnden I remember initially sitting behind the manager's dug out. It was a great place to watch football and listen to the manager's choice language. As more disabled fans started to attend matches we were then relocated into the Great Lever End. But always we entered the Stadium through the players tunnel and it was a particular thrill to get to know some players personally.

Initially, when I became disabled I was very depressed and football provided for me a great focus. Not only the football itself but I became involved in disabled issues regarding football. I am now delighted to be Vice-Chairman of the Bolton Wanderers Disabled

Alan Roberts BT, Nat Lofthouse President BWFC and Kevin Prince from the B.W.D.S.A. after the official unveiling.



Now that it is open we are delighted. To us it is the eighth wonder of the world. But, like other areas of the Stadium we have had our teething problems. Nevertheless, through meeting and talking them through we have been able to iron these out.

I suppose our problems are quite obvious. Parking, drop off points, easy access to the Stadium and toilets, good views and special needs for our blind and hard of hearing supporters. Superb access is available via a special corner door which leads directly to a slightly raised concrete platform to the North East corner of the ground. From car park to viewing position not one step!

It is possible to watch the match either from a side view about 5 metres from the touchline (40 wheelchair positions), or from a position behind the goals (32 wheelchair positions). Visiting fans have a similar facility behind the goals at the South of the Stadium with 32 wheelchair positions being available. Disabled helpers can sit directly behind on the front row of the Stadium unless they want to sit alongside when the club provide chairs on request.

We also benefit from a superb upper tier viewing facility kindly sponsored by British Telecom aptly named The B.T. Suite and officially opened by Club President Nat Lofthouse OBE. This glass fronted suite sits alongside the clubs executive boxes on level two in the North East corner. It accommodates 30 wheelchair users plus their helpers and access is available via excellent lifts and dedicated corridors free of stairs or obstacles. A similar suite is planned for the South East corner of the Stadium.

The suite also has an induction loop system for supporters with vision impairments and a similar system is available pitchside for both home and away supporters. Again this system was kindly sponsored by B.T. but designed by ourselves and Bolton Wanderers

As I originate from Dublin I suppose I should have become a Manchester United supporter. But Bolton Wanderers are my team and always will be. I never regret supporting this warm, friendly club. Bolton Wanderers Football Club have made me proud by their commitment not only by providing the town with one of the best Stadiums in Europe, but they have listened and delivered facilities for their disabled supporters which I am sure cannot be bettered in English football.



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Good luck to Bolton Wanderers in the Premiership.



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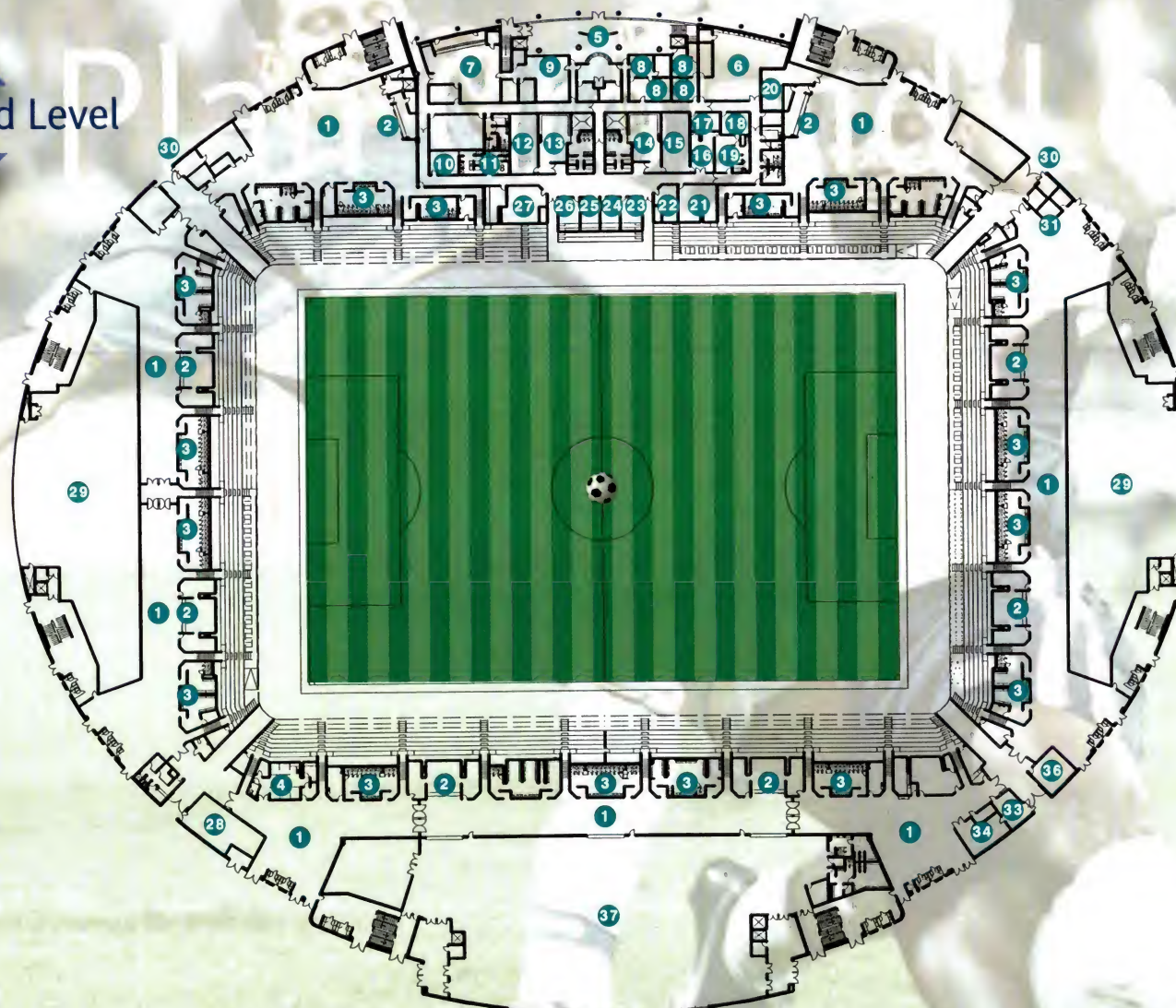
"Good luck & best wishes to Bolton Wanderers for 1997/8 season"

Plan Ground Level

South Stand

West Stand

Bolton Evening News Stand



Nat Lofthouse Stand Sponsored by Matthew Brown Plc

- 1— Spectator Concourse
- 2— Food and Drink Concessions
- 3— Toilets
- 4— First Aid Room
- 5— Main Reception
- 6— Ticket Office
- 7— Commercial Office
- 8— B.W.F.C. Administration
- 9— Reebok Stadium Administration
- 10— Referee's Room
- 11— Female Official's Changing Room
- 12— Visitor's Warm Up Room
- 13— Visitor's Changing/Showers
- 14— Home Changing/Showers
- 15— Home Warm Up Room
- 16— Physiotherapist Room
- 17— Doctor's Office
- 18— Manager's Office
- 19— Assistant Manager/Coaches
- 20— Beer Cellar
- 21— Sauna
- 22— Youth Development Officer
- 23— Boot Room
- 24— Kit Room
- 25— Store
- 26— Store
- 27— T.V. Interview Room
- 28— Police Cells
- 29— Unadopted Space
- 30— Telecom Room
- 31— Satellite First Aid Room
- 32— Switch Room
- 33— Transformer Room
- 34— Generator Room Switch
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- 36— Photographer's Room
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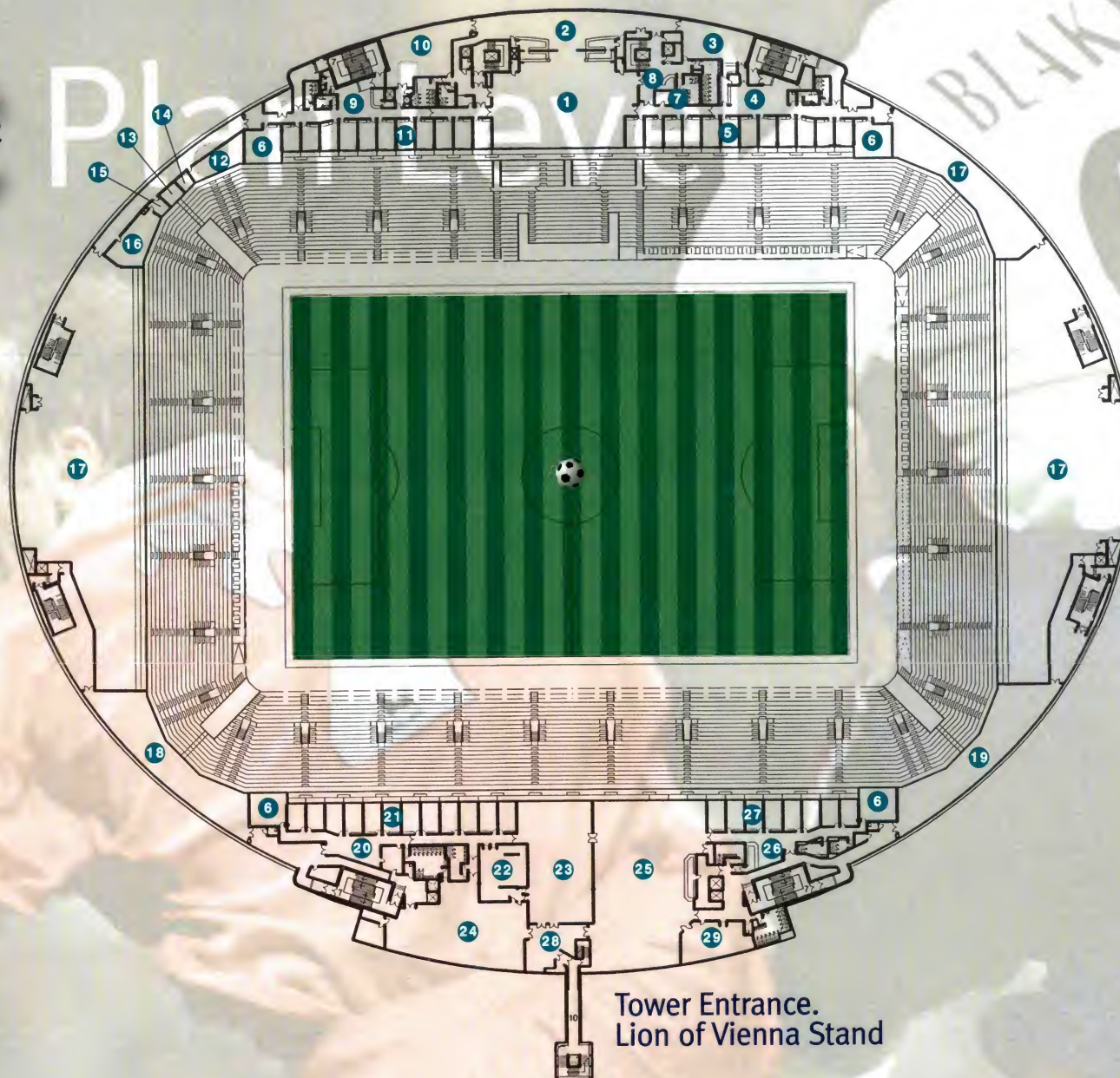


Bell Lane, Bury
 0161 761 1121

Plan Level 2

South Stand

West Stand



- 1—Platinum Suite
- 2—Piazza Bars
- 3—Sponsor's Lounge
- 4—President's Bar
- 5—President's Suites
- 6—20 Person Suite
- 7—Kitchen
- 8—Level Two Reception
- 9—Hopkinson Bar
- 10—Main Kitchen
- 11—Executive Suites
- 12—Sky TV Suite
- 13—Touchline T.V.
- 14—Big Screen Operation
- 15—Matchday Announcer
- 16—Ground Control Suite
- 17—Future Fit Out
- 18—Upper Level Disabled Viewing
- 19—The B.T. Suite Upper Level Disabled Viewing
- 20—The Foweracre Bar
- 21—Hall Of Fame Suites
- 22—Kitchen
- 23—Hall Of Fame
- 24—Burnden Lounge
- 25—Lion Of Vienna Suite
- 26—Matthew Brown Bar
- 27—Matthew Brown Suites
- 28—Nat Lofthouse Stand Reception
- 29—Kitchen

Bolton Evening News Stand

Tower Entrance.
Lion of Vienna Stand



As the project entered into May, the four month countdown to completion began.

The stadium progress continued at a hectic pace with all areas of work being opened up to allow their respective activities to commence. In the background to the site activity, the interior design scheme had been finalised and work was under way to ensure that the commitments given to ensuring quality would be achieved.

In and around the site other construction works were commencing with the need to ensure safe access to the stadium a priority. The Middlebrook development was beginning to look like a construction convention with a variety of contractors committed to ensure the completion of their respective parts.

The focal point and the centre piece of the development was and is undoubtedly The Reebok Stadium. The conglomeration of big name companies had only been enticed to the area by the fact that it would be home to one of Europe's premier stadiums.

The stadium itself was nearing ever closer to being watertight. Cladding panels and brickwork began to enclose the stands from the exterior whilst the inside had become enclosed by the positioning of the huge precast concrete terrace units which had now taken up their position in the stadium. The need to achieve a watertight building was essential to ensure that the finishes could commence in order to meet completion.

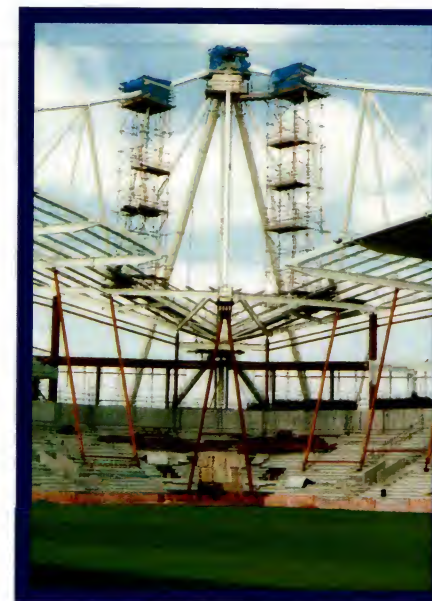
In the stands, a number of seats were taking their positions but it was still too early to appreciate the huge 'Reebok' design that would preoccupy the East stand seating. The pitch perimeter was being prepared in readiness for the perimeter running track that would see many a famous foot cross it. The structural steelwork operation neared completion but with it the presentation of another problem: How to paint the steelwork?

A gang of dedicated abseiling painters descended on site quite literally and would remain until every last beam had been given its coat of paint. In each corner the floodlights were taking shape with huge scaffold towers being assembled to facilitate the assembly of the final installation.



Outside the stadium external work commences.

Preparing for the arrival of the floodlight heads.





The abseilers arrive on site.

A gang of dedicated abseiling painters descended on site quite literally and would remain until every last beam had been given its coat of paint

View from the Sky Box



External cladding takes the building one step nearer to completion.

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Football Club on their move to the

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Main Reception, Reebok Stadium
Photograph by Kim, permission of Ian Lawson

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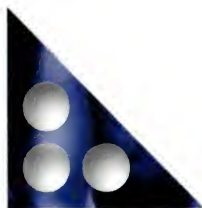
Presentations

Weddings

Sportsman's Dinners

Company Dinners

Christmas Parties



Conference & Banqueting at the Reebok



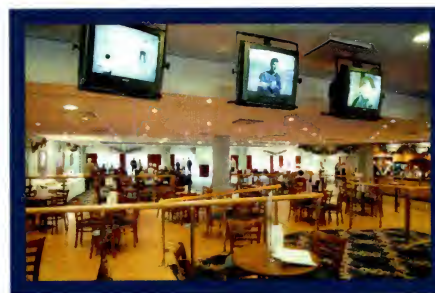
Gary Atkinson
General Manager
Ring & Brymer

The Reebok Stadium, as well as being home to Bolton Wanderers Football Club on matchdays, on non-matchdays, it is a vibrant conference and banqueting centre, incorporating the largest purpose built suites in Bolton.

Its array of rooms, a total of 54, have all been designed and built to the highest specification. Their features include natural daylight, advanced air-circulation systems, generous ceiling heights, private bars, wide access doors and lift access. The two largest Suites, the Lion of Vienna and Platinum enjoy panoramic views of the pitch, as do the 46 Executive Boxes and Corner Boxes. State of the art projection, video and sound systems are added features of the Lion of Vienna Suite.

Each and every room can be easily adapted to create the right kind of atmosphere for each individual event - from a private dinner for 10, right up to a conference or banquet for 500 people.

The conference and banqueting rooms are situated in the West and Nat Lofthouse Stand within the Stadium. Both stands have large car parks adjacent to each entrance, reception areas and cloakrooms.



The Lion of Vienna Club



A presentation in progress, availability for up to 500 guests.

Level two of the West stand houses the second largest suite, the Platinum. Ideal for dinners for up to 350 people or a theatre style presentation for up to 500 people. With its added feature of the adjacent Piazza Bar, it is impressive in every way. This additional area is suitable for all different aspects of the event, from pre dinner drinks, teas and coffees, registration, exhibition displays and is adjacent to its own reception desk.

Adjacent to the Platinum Suite is the Sponsors Lounge. A smaller room but by no means less impressive. This room is ideal for the smaller, intimate affair of up to 50 people seated theatre or banquet style.

Level one in the West stand houses the Boardroom (Director's Guests' Room on match days) and the Wanderers Suite (Players Lounge on matchdays). The Wanderers is a very adaptable room, equally as suitable for a conference as it is for a celebration party. This Suite is self-contained with its own bar and toilet facilities.

The East stand is home of the Lion of Vienna Suite, as previously mentioned above. This suite, with its purpose built dance floor, can accommodate 450 for a dinner dance. State of the art projection, video and sound systems are added features of the Lion of Vienna Suite. Another Suite, the Burnden, due to be completed in August 1998, will accommodate up to 160 people for a dinner dance.

Ring & Brymer, one of the hallmarks of leisure at Gardner Merchant are exclusive caterers to the Reebok Stadium after being awarded a 10 year contract. They have a wealth of experience and are the foremost catering specialists in prestige events. Their accomplishments have excelled from catering for the monarchy, Ambassadors and dignitaries in days gone by, to today's pre-eminent service at Royal Ascot, Alfred McAlpine Stadium, Huddersfield, the Royal Albert Hall and Murrayfield Stadium Edinburgh to name but a few.

The standard of cuisine is exemplary - whether traditional or contemporary in style. Their unrivalled expertise, extending far beyond catering, ensures all events are managed with the utmost professionalism.

Since opening its doors on 1st September 1997, the Stadium has already played host to numerous prestigious events both the local and national markets, the North West Chambers of Commerce Annual Dinner, The 1997 National Training Awards Presentation and the Bolton and Bury Export Club Dinner.

One highly successful venture which brought together the three Stadium companies, the Football Club, Reebok Stadium and Ring & Brymer, was the hosting of The Antiques Roadshow for the BBC in November 1997 (due to be aired in March 1998). This took place in the Stadium's Exhibition Hall, which offers 35,000 sq. ft. of very easily accessible open space.

Events like these are fast assisting the Reebok Stadium in becoming recognised as one of the leading conference and banqueting centre in the North of England.

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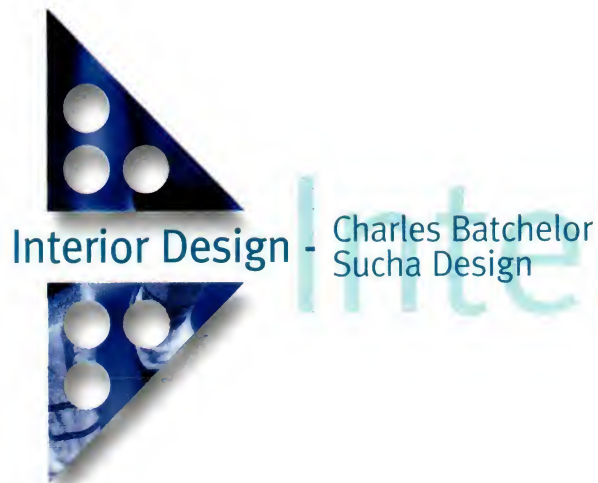
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Interior Design - Charles Batchelor Sucha Design

Sucha Design were employed by Bolton Wanderers F.C. to be responsible for the interior design and interior contracting of the hospitality areas within the stadium.

The Board of Bolton Wanderers Football Club had taken up the challenge that the stadium was not for football alone, that the hospitality spaces created for football could and would be used 365 days of the year for functions, conventions, exhibitions, seminars etc. The competition for this business is great, mainly from Hotels, and even with the draw of such a magnificent structure, the Reebok Stadium would have to compete at the highest level.

The main thrust of Sucha Design is Hotels, Hospitality and Leisure - for the major Hotel groups. The spin off from this would be that the Bolton Wanderers fans would have some of the best interior designed facilities in football.

From the outset our concept was that the hospitality areas in both East and West stands should have a thread of continuity and continue the colour themes to the club concourse and open stadium and that the individual areas should be identifiable. The atmosphere should mirror the warmth and friendliness of the club. We believed that this could best be achieved through the flooring design.

Sample colours, patterns and fixtures are presented to show the various themes that feature throughout the Suites and Hospitality areas.

Having researched carpets with club logos installed in many sporting premises, we came to the conclusion that none were practical or offered any comfort and warmth to the rooms nor did they do justice to the club's image. So it was that we designed the background carpet using the basic blue of Bolton and a palette of deep colours in a geometric design, in keeping with the Stadium. It is not a tartan, though many have laid claim to it with spurious Scottish ancestry suggestions being the McBain, Hargreaves or the McGinlay.

The basic design was then identified in each of the areas. The Platinum Suite, with the introduction of Platinum colours, the club logo interwoven with the new logo ribbons for a crisp mainly corporate image. The Lion of Vienna with the introduction of the rampant lion set in ribbons of gold and terracotta for a warm, lively function area. The Wanderers and Directors Lounge with the introduction of gold and green and a diamond motif taken from the furniture "in lay" for a cosy welcoming atmosphere as befits a Players Lounge and Directors watering hole.

With the base colourings of the carpets set, Sucha Design focused on the designs for the individual areas building up schemes of fabrics, wallcovering and paint finishes.

Lighting schemes and ceiling layouts were adapted to provide greater interest and options for the multi-function end use. It was also important to incorporate services that would be needed by the Function Conference or Exhibition organiser for visual and audio presentation, data and telecommunication and all within an attractive environment.

The last week leading to the first game saw long hours fitting the specialist blinds and blackout window treatments to satisfy the licensing laws for football; setting in position the 48 specially manufactured box tables; 1200 banquet chairs and tables; Sponsors Lounge sofas; poset tables and café chairs; the list goes on right down to selecting, framing and installing the pictures on the wall.



One area which gave us immense pleasure was the Chairmans Suite. He had commissioned the furniture for the room some eighteen months earlier and we were invited to view the furniture at the manufacturer's, Jim Greenall - a master craftsman. It is exquisite in traditional Georgian style with Bolton Wanderers' own pattern marquetry inlays. Our brief was to design the room around it and in keeping with it.

The entrance is through the mahogany doors where visiting Chairmen and dignitaries are shown through to the rotunda. This is the domed circular vestibule which is washed in blue light with spotlights picking out the Bolton Wanderers F.C. logo laid in the white and black marble floor. To the west, oversize mahogany doors curved to the wall lead through to the Chairman's Suite, to the east the doors to the pitch and the roar of the crowd.

As we were completing the Chairman's Suite, putting the finishing touches to the dried flowers, Graham Ball and Des McBain came in with top members of the board of Juventus, over to play Manchester United but taking the time to visit our own impressive stadium.

As I said at the beginning, working at the Reebok Stadium has been a joy and with still more areas to complete it continues to be a privilege to work on this magnificent Stadium.

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recommendations. The biggest hurdle to overcome was the transition of total control of safety management from the police to the club. The Police had always taken this task on in addition to their job of law enforcement. This transition meant that supporters would have to comply with requests and instructions from Stewards, not Police Officers. The response to some one in an orange jacket was hardly likely to be that given to someone dressed all in blue. Six years later I like to think that this changeover is complete but, not before countless Stewards have had to soak up a great deal of abuse.

In the close season of 1992 the clubs very first press advertisement for Stewards produced just a single applicant. He was a middle aged gent who was on sick leave from stress. In the same period of 1997, well over 400 applied. Some may think that the main reason for this contrast is the difference between the Wanderers being in the Premier Division and the wrong end of the second division. That may have something to do with it but, I know that there is a lot more to it than that. Stewards are interviewed, vetted and assessed to a degree that only one out of every five are recommended as acceptable for training. The training programme is intensive and encompasses emergency procedures, fire prevention, first aid, searching techniques, customer relations, knowledge of and enforcement of ground regulations, compliance with a very strict code of conduct and conditions of employment to name but just a few. This training programme is now set to a national standard whereas, six years previously, it was down to each individual Safety Officer.

Stewards are now better paid, better equipped, they comply with a very strict discipline code, have their own rank structure and, most importantly, accept the responsibility of policing - with a small 'p' of course, every aspect of safety within the Stadium. All these matters have contributed to attracting a calibre of men and women that respond to an organisation that has more than a degree of professionalism about it. Our friends in blue are now only in attendance at B.W.F.C. for public order matters. Now, many clubs regularly have police free matches.

I liken our Stadium on match day to a town with a 25,000 population.

Most incidents that occur in that town will and do occur in our Stadium. Lost children, lost wallets, broken bones, disputes, damage, drunkenness, offensive behaviour to name a few, even death. All these matters and control of the venue are handled from the Stadium Control Room. This room is staffed by key personnel from the club and the emergency services who have at their disposal the equipment and expertise to deal with literally any occurrence. In the room police trained stewards operate the numerous C.C.T.V. cameras that constantly scan the exterior, the concourses and the seated area. All cameras produce a precise colour image and everything seen by all cameras are recorded on a multiplex recorder. If any fan wants his picture taking the system has an instamatic camera facility and we can also get ground pictures when we link in to the Police Helicopter. Obviously, any form of illegal behaviour can be watched, photographed and used in evidence if necessary. The radio systems used by the Stewards, Police and Ambulance Service are operated and recorded in this room as well as the Turnstile monitoring system and the Stadiums 75 emergency telephones. The Stadium has over 1,200 smoke/heat detectors and manual call points which are constantly monitored on the Control Rooms master panel.

I know that for many of our fans the move from Burnden Park was not easily accepted. People had stood where their Grandads had stood, there was nostalgia, even those who recognised its frailties and Victorian facilities were heard to say 'well it's a dump, but, it's our dump'. I have walked beneath the Manchester Road Stand innumerable times and looked up at those tinder dry timber supports, and shuddered. Two of the elements that have in the past contributed to disaster have been the age and poor structural condition of the Stadium - lets not kid ourselves, at Burnden Park we had those two elements. The move to the Reebok has eliminated those risks and for that I applaud (and encore) everyone who had the foresight, the energy and many sleepless nights in bringing the transfer about. A third and equally important element is the safety management of the Stadium, if it is sloppy then the other two do not make up for it. From the Chairman down there is an ongoing determination within the Club to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable, complete safety for everyone.

In January 1992, four and a half years after retiring from the Police Force, a chance conversation and my love of football led me to the offices of Burnden Park for interview with Des McBain and Gordon Hargreaves. They were responding, I think rather reluctantly like many other football clubs, to a Taylor Report recommendation that all clubs should employ a Safety Officer. In fairness to the interviewers, I doubt if they really knew what was to be expected from the holder of this post that had been foisted on the British football world in the wake of the Hillsborough disaster. Other than a cryptic four line job description and a verbal instruction to 'sort the stewards out, neither did I. Everyone was starting from scratch. I inherited in the region of eighty people who fell into the category of Ground Steward. Perhaps 15 of that number looked upon their job with any kind of seriousness. The rest, many of whom were still at or had just left school, thought it was a good idea to watch their favourite team and get paid for it at the same time.

There was no training of any kind, little discipline or safety awareness, the Stewards were badly equipped and few accepted any kind of responsibility in the knowledge that whatever happened, the police would sort it out. I was subsequently to learn that many of my counterparts had been faced with similar attitudes and situations. Little wonder that Lord Chief Justice Taylor made so many

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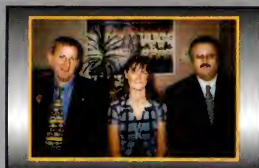
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The efforts that had been made to this date were immeasurable but in order to complete the project for the first match, extensive final efforts were required. (Had we stopped the project now and considered our achievements in the past twelve months they would have been commendable but unforgivable).

To see the stadium in the June made everyone realise the content of work still required for completion. On site amongst the team questions were not asked and doubt was not raised only the generation of team adrenalin and positive thinking was acceptable now. Indeed, the site dug deep into its resolve to find the character and strength to reach completion in time.

By this date the project had had an additional value of work equivalent to a further third of the contract sum added to its content. A reasonable contract award to a national contractor would be eight million pounds with a time ranging from six to eighteen months. The Reebok Stadium additional works equated to an additional contract but required completion in the same period.

Construction, as mentioned previously, can be measured in terms of time, cost and quality and The Reebok would be no exception. It is in hindsight, when viewing the glory of the completed stadium, that one can see that none of these factors were affected by the additional obligations imposed on the team.

As seats are installed the atmosphere of the stadium begins to get established.





Tubular steelwork above the Middlebrook Exhibition Centre.

Three months had quickly dissolved into two

The white Reebok' seats go in.



These efforts were to be rewarded
come September 1997

The month of June would see a few people jostle for priority position on the programme claiming that their works were the most important to the project. The attributes of the site team in controlling and influencing this part of the construction cannot be dismissed by those who now inhabit the stadium. Inspiring and motivating subcontractors to perform at their highest level is comparable with the task of the football management team at the Reebok. (of course there will always be those who do not want to be part of the team but we would lose them on the way) Dealing with day to day problems of subcontractors, catering for their needs, settling their differences and co-ordinating their activities to suit your own ends is at worst a logistical nightmare. However, when it is done correctly the benefits and results are considerable. These efforts were to be rewarded come September 1997.

Meanwhile the project moved on with the temporary steel props being moved and the roof placed into position. Floodlights took up their final resting place and overlooked the pitch from their place in the Horwich skyline. Seat placement continued and the word "Reebok" edged a little bit closer to history. Inside the Stadium changing areas, offices and administration areas were receiving their final instalment, as walls, floors and ceilings began to receive decoration and finishes.

Three months had quickly dissolved into two and before we had time for a quick pint at The Bromilow. July had arrived and with it the final countdown.



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Alan Thompson scores the first ever goal at the Reebok Stadium against Tottenham Hotspur on Tuesday 23rd September 1997.

Photograph by kind permission of the Bolton Evening News.

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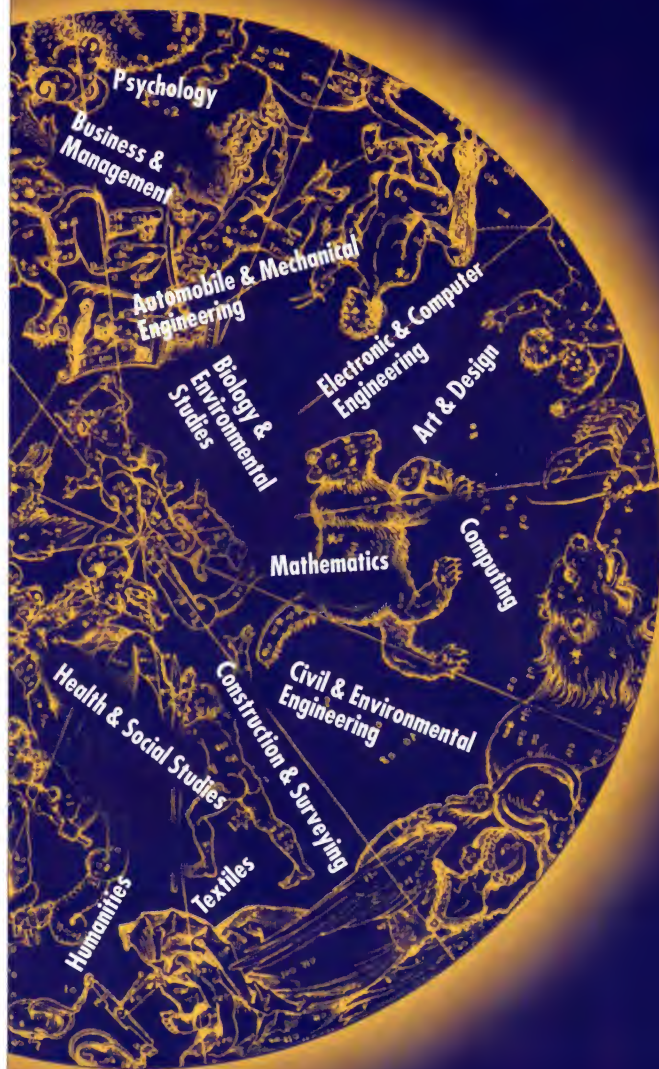
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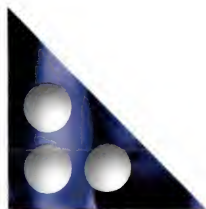
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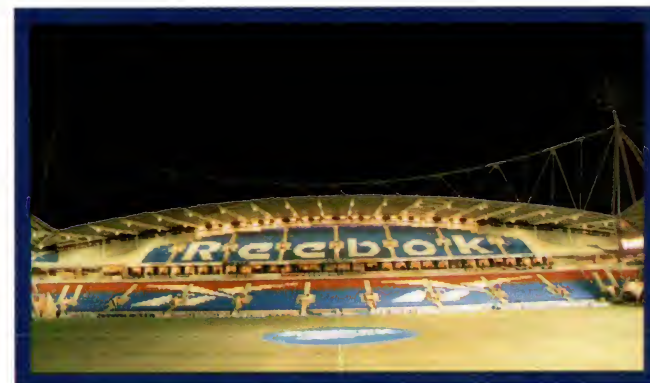
To ensure the completion date is achieved work often continued up until midnight.



A Photographer Fan



Brian White
Photographer & Wanderers Fan



Internal lights.

The late summer sun sets over the rising steel of one of the corner structures.

As a lifelong Bolton Wanderers fan and semi-professional freelance photographer, I am very happy to have been given this opportunity to express myself photographically on what I consider to be the most exciting project Bolton/Horwich has experienced for many years. My past ventures were much further afield photographing the amazing architectural features of India, the Far East and the 5000 year old pyramids and temples of Ancient Egypt.

The challenge of illustrating the fantastic technological advancement in construction on my own doorstep was tremendous.

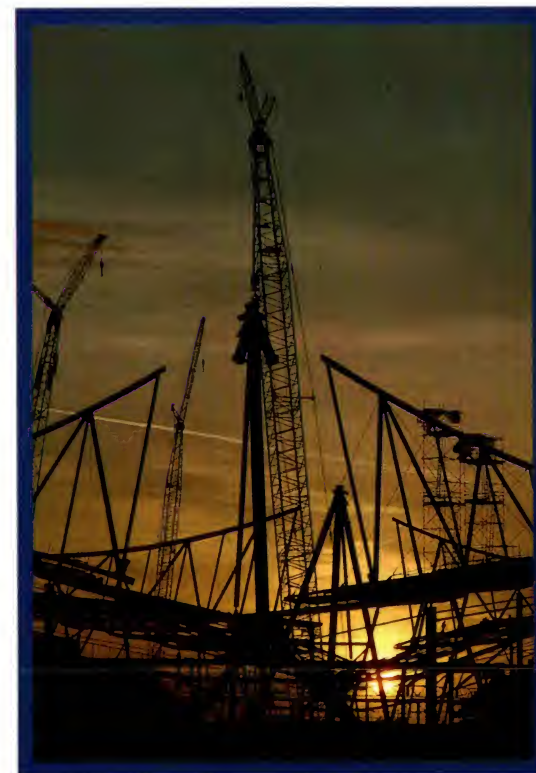
To produce these images I spent many hours visiting the Middlebrook Site at different times of the day/night to assess the various lighting conditions in order to visualise the effects I wished to create.

My intention was not to make a record of the continual construction but to view various aspects of it from a more creative angle.

Using a variety of photographic equipment, past experience and a lot of patience I was able to create a collection of photographs depicting for example how the natural elements of a dramatic sky in varying lighting conditions, producing a compressed perspective and silhouette. How the man-made floodlights and road lights illuminate the Stadium in such a way as to create a visual futuristic perception.

These photographs are just a few examples of my work which I am continually expanding as this modern day technological construction has provided what I consider to be photographically, a visual monument of 20th century innovation at its peak as we move towards the millennium.

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Hospitality Boxes - Nigel Ball Marketing Manager



behind glass, it was felt that supporters prefer to have outside match seating in the atmosphere of the Stadium. The balcony level seating incorporated in the design provides all boxholders with an excellent view of the action from a private position in front of their box. Research also indicated that hospitality boxholders at most Stadiums did not have adequate privacy from other supporters seating in front of their box. Consequently a significant drop in level was created immediately in front of the balcony in order that boxholders can enjoy privacy both within their box and also from the balcony level seating.

There are a total of 47 boxes at the Reebok Stadium. The first phase comprised of 23 hospitality boxes on level 2 in the West Stand situated at either side of the main Banqueting Suite overlooking the pitch. Following early research into hospitality box facilities at other Stadiums the Club identified certain key criteria to be incorporated by the Architects in their design.

It was decided that it was essential that the boxes could accommodate up to 10 people in comfort, have external balcony seating and be well appointed. Each Suite of boxes was to also include a corporate bar area to provide boxholders with the opportunity to socialise with each other before and after games. Rather than be seated

The boxes in the West Stand are named The Presidents Suite and the Executive Suite. The bar within the Executive Suite was named the Hopkinson Bar after former Wanderers and England goalkeeper Eddie Hopkinson who made a record 578 appearances for Bolton (1956-69). The Presidents Suite was named after Club President Nat Lofthouse.

From the early construction stages there was great interest in the Stadium and the initial marketing of the boxes proved to be a tremendous success with all the boxes being let within a matter of weeks. Priority upon release was given to companies who were existing supporters of the Club and founder boxholders included a mix of locally based, international, national and regional companies.

To assist with the marketing exercise a replica hospitality box was constructed at the site Visitor Centre which was used by the Marketing Manager for presentations. Waiting lists soon developed and the decision was taken to instruct the Architect to design further Suites of hospitality boxes in the Nat Lofthouse (East) Stand. A total of 20 hospitality boxes are accommodated in the Hall of Fame Suite and the Matthew Brown Suite. The bar in the Hall of Fame Suite was named The Foweraker Bar after Charles Foweraker the Wanderers Manager in the 1920's whose teams won the F.A. Cup in 1923, 1926 and 1929. The Nat Lofthouse Stand boxes formed part of the second phase of hospitality facilities which opened shortly after the start of the 1997/98 season.



hospitality boxes accommodate 10 people in comfort and style.

Four, separate double size hospitality boxes can also be found in each corner of the Stadium. These boxes offer luxurious accommodation and pre-match dining facilities for 10 people who have seating from inside the box. On non matchdays they are ideal for small business meetings or break out rooms from the main Banqueting Suites. The corner box in the Matthew Brown Suite, named 'The Party Suite' is designed to accommodate up to 20 people on matchdays and is available to hire on an individual match basis. Guests can enjoy a pre-match buffet meal in an informal seating setting with a panoramic view of the Stadium.

All hospitality boxes have their own television showing the Wanderers Television, Sky and Terrestrial channels. Boxholders also benefit from a hostess drinks order service.

The attention to detail shown in the design of the hospitality boxes at the Reebok Stadium has led to them being generally acknowledged as being amongst the best currently available in British Football.



The corner hospitality boxes offer a spectacular match day experience. Photo: Ian Lawson






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Rail Halt

John Walsh O.B.E.
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Looking east towards Bolton, the proposed rail halt will provide easy access to the Stadium and Middlebrook site.

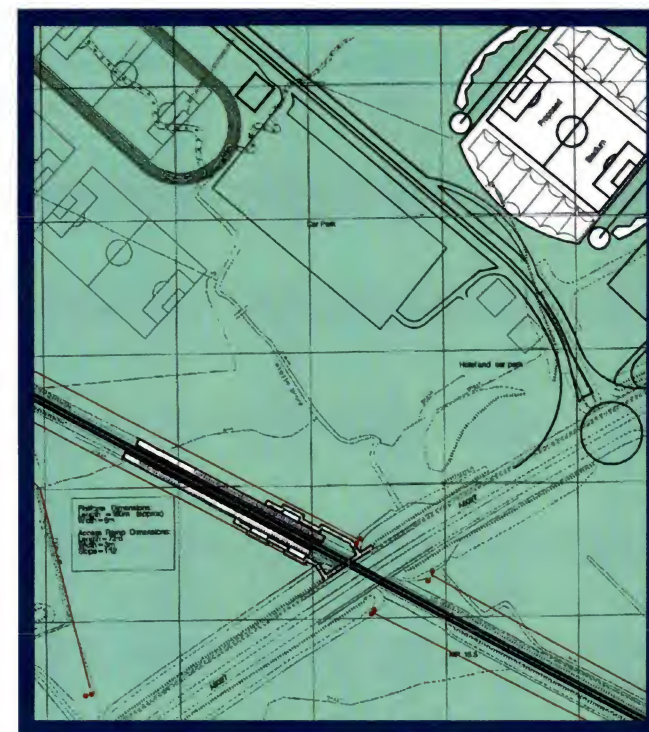
Although the Stadium sits alongside the main Manchester-Preston railway, the nearest stations at Blackrod and Lostock are both some way from the site. From the outset, Bolton Wanderers, along with the joint developers, the Emerson Group and Bolton MBC, agreed to consider the need for a new railway station at the site. The developers have jointly funded a number of feasibility studies to progress the option, but the project is not without difficulties. Initial studies indicated that from a building point of view, the best location for the rail halt would be the point furthest from the Stadium, more towards Chorley than Bolton. Everyone accepts that, from the point of view of both Bolton Wanderers' fans and visitors to the Retail Development, this was inappropriate and therefore a more costly option of building adjacent to De Haviland Way became the preferred, indeed only, option.

Joint discussions between the developers, Railtrack, train operators, and Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive, were held to progress the matter, and a clearer picture developed. The need to ensure a station that could operate 7 days a week and would also take the peak demand, both before and after a match, required a considerable number of design changes.

Inevitably, all of these have caused delay to the project and equally inevitably the initial budget costs have increased dramatically. Despite this, the partners have remained determined to progress the development in order to give yet another means to get fans to and from Reebok Stadium. The intended location of the railway station is adjacent to the bridge carrying De Haviland Way over the railway. This is close to the Holiday Inn and Innkeepers Fayre, next to the site allocated for the proposed Indoor/Outdoor Tennis Centre. From the station, fans would have to walk only some 200 yards to the main West Stand. In order to make the proposed rail halt a more attractive development and to link it with the site as a whole, the three partners are currently constructing a footbridge to cross the main Burnden Way vehicle access to the site. This will enable users of the railway to link into the site without having any problems with traffic and will be particularly important on matchdays to ensure that before and after the match, buses and cars can enter and leave the site with minimal delays.

The detailed study of its season ticket holder/membership register, which the Club has already undertaken, shows a large number of supporters who would benefit from a potential railway station. A number of fans live along the Preston-Manchester corridor, or could link into it from other stations. It is for this reason that Bolton Wanderers has continued to promote this important additional element to the total development. Along with the other partners, the club has held regular meetings with the authorities involved to see how the project can best be undertaken.

It is pleasing to note that the Rail Operators, and the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive, have already made provisional arrangements in the draft timetables for 1998/99 to allow trains to stop, on a regular basis. When the stadium station is completed, it would provide the final piece in the present jigsaw of transport arrangements. The recent planning approval for development is the next stage of its progress. There are many hurdles yet to be overcome before development can take place, and whilst ideally the station would have been built and opened when the Stadium was completed, timing made this impossible. Current indications are that the project can be achieved and that in future seasons, fans will be able to travel not just by bus or car to Reebok Stadium, but also by a direct rail link. The earlier transport survey showed that many fans would use such a facility, and although the current estimated construction costs are high, the partners continue to pursue their initial commitment.



J u l y 1997 Painting

By July the huge structure of the Reebok Stadium was in its full glory. With all stands complete and the floodlights fully positioned the dream was becoming reality.

This was, however, no time to take the foot off the pedal for behind all the architectural splendour that filled Middlebrook there was still a considerable amount of work to finish. This was to be the start of a two month period that would see the character and resource of those involved with the stadium put to test.

The players changing areas needed completing, so did the offices and administration areas, and of utmost importance the executive areas to the west stand. The mixture of trades on site and the sheer number of people working on the stadium at any one time made it almost appear as if there were too many people to get anything done.



Glass is installed at level 2. in the South Stand

Radios buzzed constantly, and with it instructions and heckling between staff and subcontractors alike, this was no longer a place for the faint hearted. The heat on the project had now been turned up and now would be a test of all the promises made.

The players and playing staff began to arrive at The Stadium in order to commence periodic training sessions. We all greeted this invasion of our Stadium (as it was then) with respect and allowed the players to enjoy our facilities. I say "our" because somewhere in all this we had all become very territorial, we had all somehow got involuntarily attached, this was our baby, our project and we were proud of it. To release this Stadium to the club was like letting your child loose into the world after 20 years of nurturing, it was hard, but alas inevitable.

The whole thing has been about football and providing a community with a stadium in which to gather and appreciate the beautiful game



A couple of coats of paint and were finished.



The Nat Lofthouse stand sponsored by Matthew Brown PLC awaits the cushioned seats for the Lion of Vienna Club members.

The players and playing staff began to arrive at The Stadium in order to commence periodic training sessions

The sight of the team training provided welcome respite and the opportunity to remember what was the most important aspect of the project. The whole thing has been about football and providing a community with a stadium in which to gather and appreciate the beautiful game.

As the stars all enjoyed their spell in our stadium I felt some self importance that I knew it better than any of them, but with it some sorrow that in two months notice it would no longer be ours and would be in the rightful hands of its rightful owners Bolton Wanderers Football Club.

As I saw many a ball hit the back of the net I stopped to consider the first goal at the Reebok Stadium.

Of course Alan Thompson thinks he has this honour, however the true identity of the first goal at the Reebok will remain a mystery that one day Arthur. C. Clarke may attempt to unravel. For now though, I will accredit Mr Thompson with the glory.

The summer sun continued during July and made for ideal site conditions. The progress was good if not a little hectic as we entered the period of the final countdown.



Abseiling and rock climbing techniques are employed in order to paint and maintain the huge steel roof framework.

The Middlebrook Exhibition Centre nears completion.

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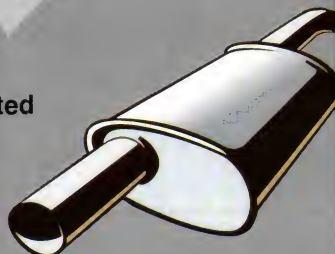
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The Players' Lounge

Alan Fullelove
Press & PR Officer BWFC



It is the hottest ticket in town and getting hold of one is very much a case of who you know rather than what you know.

If the players' lounge were to be thrown open to supporters throughout the season, it would be an autograph hunter's paradise.

This is the room in which players from both teams meet up after the game with their friends and relatives. This is where they relax over a drink, discuss the match and get up to date with the news from the football circuit.

At the Reebok Stadium the lounge, appropriately called The Wanderers' Bar, holds around 100 people. But even a room as big as that fills up far too quickly and it's very definitely standing room only after any game.

Pre-match is when the lounge appears to turn itself into a creche. Wives and girlfriends, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, children and friends take over the room as the players themselves prepare for the action ahead.

Tea and coffee, sandwiches and biscuits are available from the buffet table while the bar staff are on hand to serve drinks, both soft and alcoholic.

Players Lounge
Wanderers Bar



For wives with very young children, it is possible to watch the game on Wanderers T.V. But for those who like the action live, it is a short walk from the lounge to the main stand.

For the players themselves The Wanderers Bar is an escape after the long round of post-match press interviews and a welcome addition to the Reebok Stadium facilities.

Director's Guest Lounge

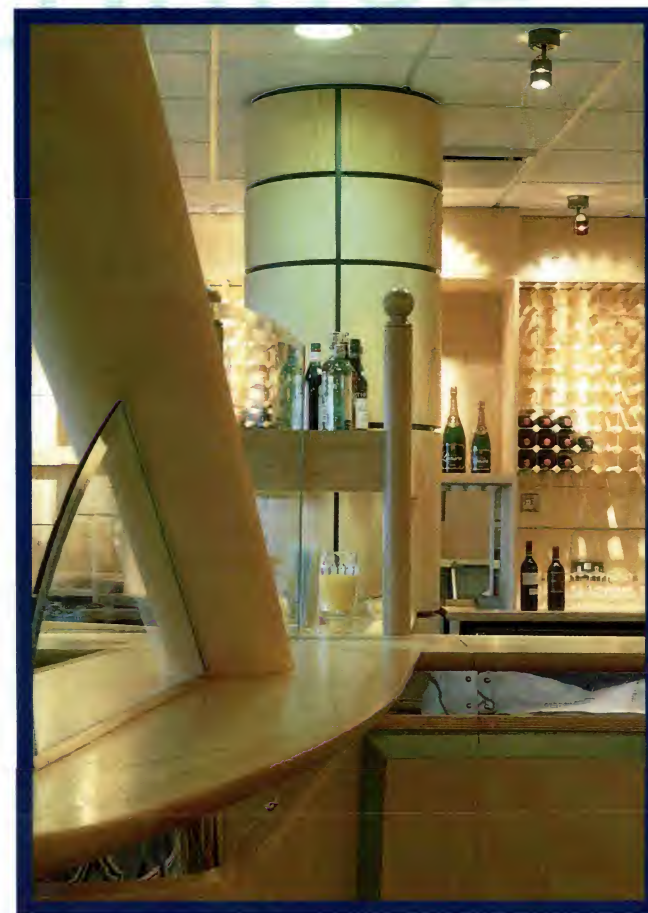
Alongside the Wanderers' Bar (Players' Lounge) is the Directors' Guest Lounge. It is a place where guests of the Club from many aspects of the football world are entertained on matchdays. The Lounge can accommodate up to 150 people but normally a matchday will see around 80 people using the facility.

The bar has a particular feature. Cutting through the centre of the bar top is a 10" diameter bracing member used to give additional stability to the steelwork at this point of the building. Throughout most floors of the building these steel bracing members are hidden. As it cuts through the Directors' Guest Lounge interior designers Sucha Design made a feature of this particular piece of steelwork. As the bar is designed to resemble a ship the steel bracing member looks like a mast cutting into the ship's deck.

The room is also ideal for small meetings, conferences, seminars and is used extensively throughout the week for these type of functions. But on matchdays the room has a particular atmosphere. Especially when Bolton Wanderers are celebrating a victory.

Discuss the match and get up to date with the news from the football circuit.

Directors Guests Lounge
Photo: Ian Lawson



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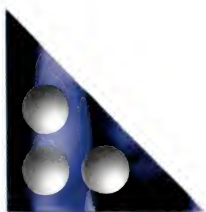
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Did you Know - Phil Hampson Resident Engineer



Each corner tunnel can accommodate road-going vehicles, and those at the south east and south west corners have been designed to be slightly higher to allow access for concert vehicles.

Did You Know?

- There are 950 in-situ concrete piles and these are topped off with 438 pile caps of 52 differing types . . . each of the corner floodlights is held down with three arrangements of these pile caps . . . the smallest of these pile caps contains 230 cubic metres of concrete, and weighs 545 tonnes.
- The stand roof is approximately 27m (88 feet) high . . . the tops of the masts are 43m (140 feet) and the floodlights 56m (182 feet) above ground level.
- There are over 2,500 precast concrete units, all of which are supported by 3,100 tonnes of stadium steel, and further topped off with 1,650 tonnes of roof steelwork.
- The floodlights have a dual illumination: 800 lux to satisfy the requirements of the FA Premiership, and 1200 lux to meet the latest requirements of the UEFA/FIFA guidelines.
- Greater directional lighting is provided from the western side of the Stadium to aid television coverage and broadcasting.
- Over 24,000 square metres of metal decking was used to the upper floors . . . the total concreted area exceeds 40,000 square metres.
- There are two huge 500 kVA generators housed on the ground floor, and these feed the essential service boards, particularly used on matchdays and which consist of emergency lighting, emergency telephones, public address systems, turnstile counting, CCTV, and the like. Bolton Wanderers can produce electricity and sell back to the National Grid.
- The curved effect of the Stadium at roof level is held in place by the “dog-bone” trusses spanning the length of each stand and supported by the corner floodlight structures . . . each of these large trusses actually slopes inwards, the effect of which can only really be seen from outside.
- The blue roofing covers over 16,000 square metres and is of the Plannja type . . . below this to the rear, and at several differing levels, weatherproofing is provided by a flexible Trocal membrane roof approaching 5,000 square metres in area.
- Weatherproofing to the external facades is of several differing types: glazing, cladding, brickwork and blockwork . . . over 9,000 square metres of cladding has been used . . . blue engineering brickwork is a constant feature around the Stadium perimeter from Levels 0 to 1, . . . over 90,000 bricks have been used to this element alone, covering over 1,500 square metres.
- The white glazed blockwork used on the West and East Stands covers over 2,200 square metres and forms gigantic goal posts.
- 26,000 square metres of blockwork has been laid at Reebok, over a quarter of a million blocks . . . all construction at the lower level is of blockwork construction although, on upper levels, dri-lining was used to facilitate speedier construction and reduce drying out periods.
- 28 double and 4 single turnstiles have been installed to allow easier ingress into the Stadium by the public on matchdays . . . the same number of turnstiles could accommodate almost 40,000 people passing through per hour under the Green Guide.
- The Stadium has been designed on the basis of four separate buildings linked together, these being the North, South, East and West Stands.
- Each corner tunnel can accommodate road-going vehicles, and those at the south east and south west corners have been designed to be slightly higher to allow access for concert vehicles.
- Vertical access within the Stadium is provided via scissor stairs . . . mechanic vertical transportation is via lifts, some of which are of 13 person capacity to allow greater comfort . . . each lift is capable of taking wheelchair users . . . one in each of the East and West Stands allows stretchers to be accommodated.
- The piazza is approximately 15m wide and covers 10,000 square metres . . . it goes the complete way around the Stadium and gives pedestrian access to the visitors car park, the ‘Banana’ Road outside the West Stand, the Directors and disabled car park areas, the Club Shop and the Exhibition Hall.

Greater directional lighting is provided from the western side of the Stadium to aid television coverage and broadcasting.

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BWFC Merchandising at the Reebok

Chris Ball
Shop Manager
Reebok Stadium

Soccer merchandising is a huge business. Football Clubs, both Premier League and Nationwide League, are realising the potential of a well run professional retailing operation. The closure of Burnden Park, and with it the Club Shop, meant plans for a new retail outlet had to be devised for the Reebok Stadium.

It could be said that so long as an item of goods, whatever it may be, has a Club logo on it, that it will sell to a fan of that particular Club. This could well be true, but at Bolton Wanderers we had gone through the biggest change ever, and with the Stadium becoming one of the landmarks of design in English football, we had to continue the quality of design and thought, through into our merchandising and mail order.

Everyone by now is well aware that the main sponsor of the Football Club is Reebok. The team wear it on their shirts and the arena they perform in is the Reebok Stadium. It was an obvious benefit to us that the Club sponsor was one of the leading sportswear manufacturers in the world, therefore the expertise they had in retail merchandising, marketing, etc. would benefit our operation greatly.

We opened discussions with Reebok on our proposals for a new merchandising Store at the Stadium, with a potential for a second Store in the Town Centre. Reebok agreed to help us on the whole philosophy of the Stores, from the design and construction through to the operation.

As a Football Club, we were at the beginning of a huge learning curve. We had just moved into a Stadium, more reminiscent of a luxury hotel, with ten times the corporate guests we had known before. Just as with the hospitality, the merchandising operation had to be ten times larger than the previous one, and be able to compete within the sporting market place.

The location for the new Store was to be opposite the East Stand, towards the northern end of the Stadium. We had 5,000 sq. ft. of space which had to be designed to a maximum potential and have the look and feel of quality. With the help of Reebok's Design Team and our own Design Consultant, Andrew Hobson, we finally agreed on a scheme that would give us the results we were looking for. Display is of paramount importance. When units are busy, it is a major advantage for the customer to be able to see the product with the price displayed and make their choice before they get to the counter. This will therefore speed up the time of transaction.



5000 sqft of floorspace provide stark contrast to the old shop at Burnden Park.



Excellent marketing exposure for both Reebok and the club.

Staff requirements are equally as important. Adequate toilet and changing facilities, along with hot water heaters for hot drinks and washing, are essential, especially when the Store opens for late night events. Staff are also dressed in easily identifiable uniforms so that visitors can easily distinguish official merchandise staff, and the corporate image is maintained.

The design of the shop has created a very upmarket image and provided excellent marketing exposure for both Reebok and the Football Club. Once the plans had been agreed, the next task was to get the Store at the Stadium, and a second Store in the Town, open for the Christmas rush. Working drawings and building shop fitting work was done by ADP of Leicester. They had been responsible for many Reebok Stores in the past but, of more interest, had experience with the merchandising operation at Liverpool. F.C.

The Store at the Stadium opened on Tuesday 25th November 1997 with an official opening the following Thursday by the Mayor of Bolton, and the players. The Town Centre Store, situated at 12 Newport Street, opened a week later. In conjunction with the retail outlets, a mail order service is available, with a catalogue on request from the Stadium.

It is essential that Bolton Wanderers are able to compete with other Premier League teams both on and off the field. New retail facilities at the Reebok and in the town centre, now give us the potential to do just that.



Finishing Touches



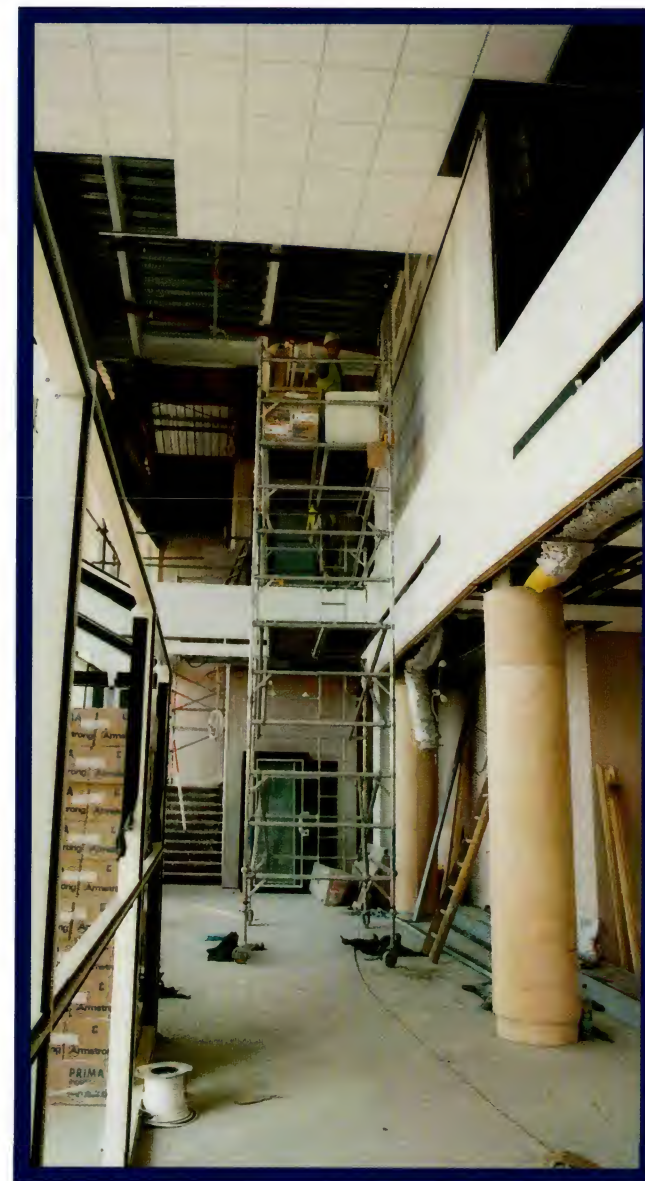
Dry run day'. Over 10,000 fans turned up on Saturday 31st August 1997 to view the stadium for the first time. The stadium was officially blessed by Canon Alan Wolstencroft, Vicar of Bolton.

With the beginning of August came the countdown to the project's completion. The twelve months preceeding this point became a distant memory and now was the time when the men would be separated from the boys.

The warm days had extended our working hours beyond belief and we were all grateful for the long days which enabled work to continue well into the night. Thoughts of holidays were distant and those of the staff retaining consciousness after the previous nights work managed to enjoy some of the late summer sun hovering over the almost complete stadium. The adrenalin that now pumped through the veins of staff and tradesmen alike served as the lifeblood of the project completion. Sixteen hour shifts were undertaken on a diet of coke and chips plus a substantial helping of camaraderie. On occasions the added incentive of a quick visit to The Bromilow or Barnstormers on the route home did provide an additional source of motivation and inspiration for some, not to mention me.

Days rolled into nights and with it the end date would loom ever nearer, there was no escaping it, it was tattooed on our brains. Members of staff would participate in a morning team meeting and would continue to encourage each other throughout the day.

As the level of expectancy increased, so too did the number of visitors to the Stadium, each of them eager to work out the location of their seats. Many would arrive late into the evening with the grim hopes of a guided tour or better still to see their team idols train, desperately clutching for scraps of anything to hold onto, just like we were for time.



The main reception nears completion



Gordon Hargreaves, Lofty and Nat Lofthouse lay the turf from Burnden Park, forever linking the old with the new.

The twelve months preceeding this point became a distant memory and now was the time when the men would be separated from the boys

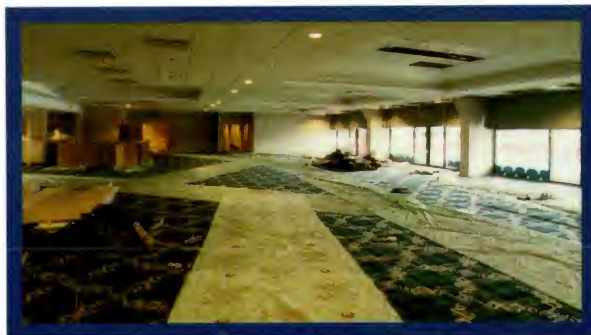
The majority of hard work in a construction project is normally complete by the later stage, however, it is those final touches that make all the difference.

Consider having a room full of excited children waiting for the Christmas tree lights to come on only to discover the fuse has blown.

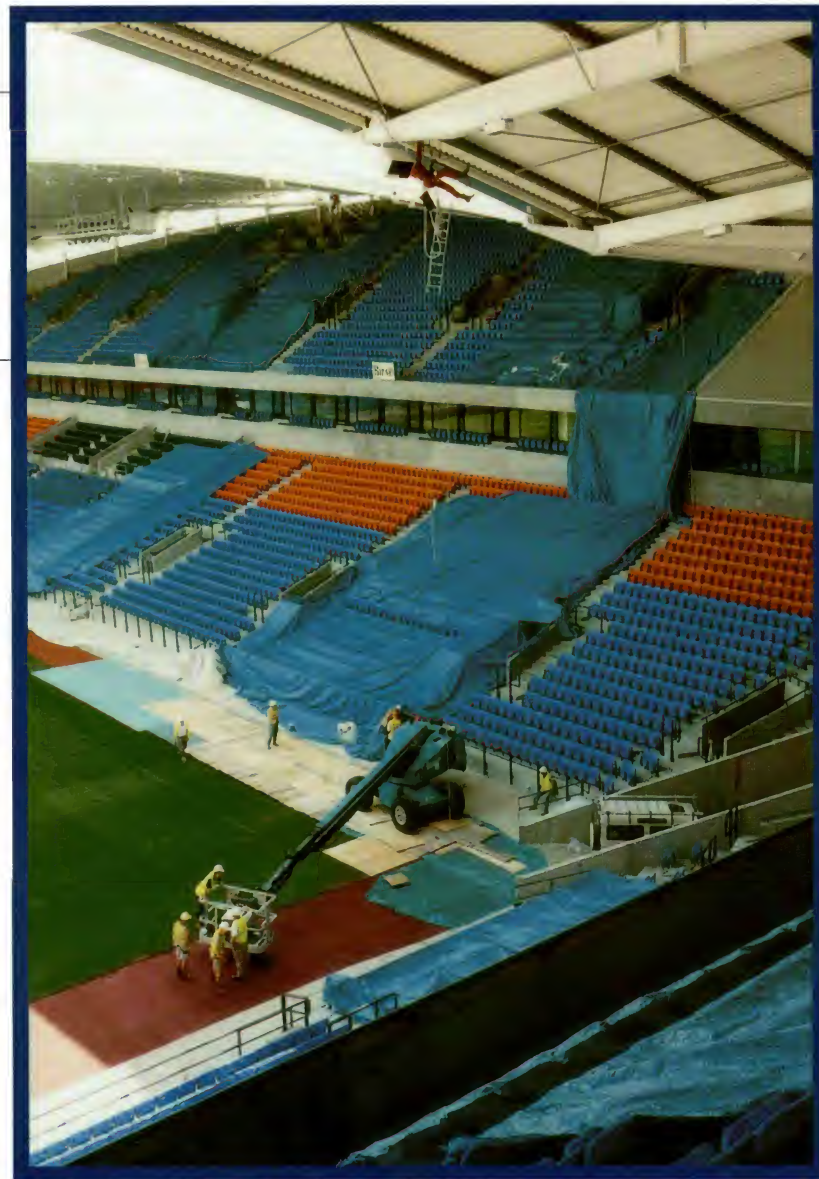
This is the scenario of the final stage, it is knowing that once the doors are open, everything is going to work. Each of the fans will find his/her seat, they will all be able to buy food from the concession stands in quality surroundings.

The unique floodlight flag design which has a diamond framework carrying the lights themselves was soon picked up by the graphic designers advising the Stadium Marketing Department. This design is now used extensively for all Stadium signage. As the end date neared, work continued right up until the very last available moment, our climatic, dramatic ending awaited us all. For those there on opening match night they will remember the groundswell of expectancy that filled the Stadium and its piazza.

For some this was just about football, whilst for others it was their just reward for many months of commitment and hard work. For me personally it was the knitting of all these things together, for I love both my career in construction and my passion for football is only surpassed by the love I have for my baby daughter whose birth in May was the only milestone of the project which I have not mentioned.



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The Kick Off at The Reebok



Gordon Sharrock
Chief Football Writer
Bolton Evening News

The long-awaited first game at the Reebok was never going to match the hype and expectation that had built up to such a nerve-jangling crescendo!

Years in the planning, months in the building, 90 minutes of football could not possibly do justice to the work that had gone into such a magnificent new Stadium.

As events panned out, the Premiership contest between Wanderers and Everton was a disappointing anti-climax in purely football terms.

Of course, it will live in the memory forever. One of the true "I was there!" occasions to recount to your grandchildren in the years to come but it will not be remembered for the quality of football on show.

It had its moments and its controversy and Wanderers fans have argued long and hard about the "goal that got away" to back their claim that their team had the best chances to have won it. Had they emerged unscathed, the professionals would have considered it a satisfactory night's work but, sadly, the game that heralded the dawn of a new era had its darker side with record signing Robbie Elliott stretchered off after an hour with a badly broken leg - a personal tragedy for such a talented player on his home debut.

As fellow new arrival Peter Beardsley put it: "That's really of more concern than the result." The Elliott incident apart, Wanderers were relieved to take a point. They knew full well that things could have turned out much worse, resultwise, and recognised the fact that, performance-wise, it was always going to be difficult to live up to such a glittering occasion.

They survived a torrid first quarter, frozen like rabbits caught in a blaze of headlights. Better teams than Everton would probably have punished them far more severely but Keith Branagan had just one serious save to make in the Bolton goal and slowly the tide turned with Neville Southall having to be at his best to save from Nathan Blake and Scott Sellars missing the target when he should have scored.

On the balance of play it was Wanderers fans whose spirits were highest as they sat back in their comfortable seats or queued at the modern kiosks and enjoyed their first 'interval' at the new ground.

Nine minutes into the second half came the decision that Wanderers will always be convinced robbed them of the win that would have graced the historic occasion.

Gerry Taggart had kept a vice-like grip on danger-man, Duncan Ferguson, and appeared to have crowned a magnificent performance when his header looped over Southall and dropped over the Everton line before full-back Terry Phelan hacked it away.

To everyone's amazement - and Wanderers had the Sky TV coverage of the game to support their case - referee Steve Lodge waved 'play-on'.

The Barnsley official's error (he later claimed to have been unsighted) sparked a debate that had every section of the football world considering the merits, or otherwise, of 'electronic eyes', 'fourth officials' and 'instant action replays'.

There was a deep sense of injustice in the Wanderers' camp - aggravated the more the incident was highlighted in the following days. But, despite everything that was said (Everton captain Gary Speed admitted the ball was definitely over the line) nothing could change events on the night and, apart from a good chance spurned by Blake, there wasn't another worthwhile scoring effort from either side.

For all that, the occasion was electric.

Many in the near-capacity crowd of 23,131 got their first glimpse of the spectacular new Stadium and the experience was a truly memorable one.

Had there been a goal for the Wanderers fans to cheer they would surely have raised the roof. Just five months after bidding an emotional 'farewell' to Burnden Park, they had settled into their new show home and were bursting with pride.

The emotional, pre-match minute's silence in tribute to Diana, Princess of Wales, who had been killed in a car crash in Paris the previous day.

The teams on that September night:



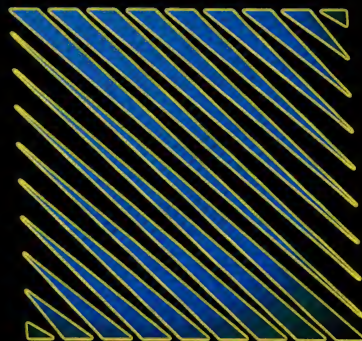
The goal that got away! Bolton v. Everton, opening match at the Reebok Stadium, 1st September 1997, final result Bolton Wanderers 0, Everton 0.

Wanderers: Branagan; Phillips, Bergsson, Taggart, Elliott (sub McAnespie); Pollock, Frandsen, Thompson, Sellars; Beardsley (sub McGinlay), Blake.

Everton: Southall; Thomas (sub Hinchcliffe), Watson (sub Short), Bilic, Phelan; Stuart, Speed, Williamson, Oster; Barmby (sub Branch), Ferguson.

Although there have only been around a dozen new Stadiums opened in the last 30 years, statistics show that the home team normally lose the first match as the occasion can often be bigger than the match for the home team players. So a draw under such circumstances must be regarded as satisfactory. What about the Reebok Stadium? A unanimous verdict . . . Magnificent!

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Rock at the Reebok

Paul Fletcher
Chief Executive
Reebok Stadium



There are some obvious differences. For example, a Rock concert crowd are all attending the event to see the artist, so in effect there are no opposing sections in the crowd, which removes the need for segregation.

The 'event day' is also far longer than the 2-3 hour football visit. In fact, many rock fans will arrive at the venue between 10 am - midday in the hope of getting a position in close proximity to the stage. For most spectators attending the event, their 'event day' is around 7 hours, therefore food, drink and toilet provisions obviously need careful planning. Especially where the profile of the Artist will attract a large female attendance and the need for 60% female toilets: 40% male toilets are required, in stark contrast to a normal football crowd which can sometimes be 6:1 male dominated.

An outdoor Sports Stadium event must not be confused with the indoor Arena event. It has been suggested in local press that the Reebok will be in direct competition with the Manchester Nynex Arena. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Where an indoor arena can stage events twelve months of the year because of the covered roof, a sports stadium is limited to the 3 months of June, July and August due to weather and football matches. On the positive side, where an arena can normally fit in around 12,000 to 15,000 spectators, a sports stadium can provide around 40,000.

Although the planning of an event such as a rock concert can take many months, the event itself takes around 5 days with the main areas being the erection of the stage and lighting plus the coverage of the pitch. There are various pitch covers to consider ranging from Teraplas to Tildernet to Portafloor. Often a combination of these floor covers provides the best result.

The effects of a Rock Event on the local community also needs careful consideration. A particular problem (often unfounded) is the 'noise' such an event creates. Many local inhabitants can be fearful that the sound generated by a Rock band will be heard within their homes, late into the evening. To safeguard local residents there are strict guidelines covered by Environmental Health which requires the promoter to employ independent sound monitoring specialists to: (a) check decibel levels at regular intervals during both the sound tests and the event itself, (b) react to any telephone complaints which arise.

Overall, the local community experience far more benefits from such an event than problems. On the event day 'Business is Booming'. As people travel in from all over the country, all hotels are full; restaurants booked up; garages, pubs and sweet shops report highest turnover figures. The secondary spend becomes a real boost to the local economy.

For the Town itself, becoming a Rock Concert Venue, brings both National and International acclaim. At the Reebok Stadium we are confident that it will not be long before Bolton stands alongside similar venues such as San Francisco, Rome, Paris, Sydney and Las Vegas.



The design brief given to the architects was to ensure the Stadium was not only a football and leisure facility, but also a Rock Concert Venue. Although the concept of staging a Rock Concert at a football Stadium appears straightforward, in practice it is far more complex. Most of the 91 league club football grounds are designed to get spectators in, and out, of seats. With Rock Concerts, the emphasis focuses on the need to get up to 20,000 spectators, safely, on and off the pitch. As with football in the 1990's, Rock Events put spectator safety as the number one criteria. A licence must be obtained from the Local Authority who will normally use as reference The Guide to Health, Safety and Welfare at Pop Concerts (often referred to as The Purple Guide) for guidance.

This excellent document covers every aspect of the event including Event Management; Crowd Movement and Safety; Legal Duties; Seating Arrangements; Pass out Systems; Barriers and Fences; Staging; Mixing Towers and Sound Monitoring; Pitch Covering; Lighting; Access and Egress; Medical Provision; Facilities for People with Disabilities; The 'Pit'; Pyrotechnics; Parking; Signage; plus a multitude of similar considerations.

For football clubs staging Rock events, the 'crowd' profile provides a complete contrast to a normal football match.



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When you speak to any of Harrison's customers, they will tell you of the help and advice offered when initial contact was made to the Company and how pleasantly surprised they were when they received their quotation in comparison to others. They will also express total satisfaction of the various tradesmen involved with their installation of Harrison's product. Some of their work is highlighted on the Harrison's Promotional video, which is available on request, which details the background of the Company and shows all the products available including Finance facilities.

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Peter Myers Director Touchline TV Wanderers TV - Touchline TV



'The end of an era' video proved a great success amongst fans, showing footage that had never been seen before.



Touchline Television first joined forces with Bolton Wanderers during the 95/96 season. Initially the service consisted of providing match videos for sale in the Club Shop. These videos were filmed from the gantry at Burnden Park using a single camera. Commentary was added and the video was produced with opening titles before being duplicated and supplied to the Club Shop. Alongside these match videos Touchline TV also produced compilation videos again for sale exclusively through the Club Shop. These compilation videos contained highlights of the season so far and included information from behind-the-scenes, such as interviews with the players and playing staff. This service continued until half way through the Championship season of 96/97. It became clear that Bolton were on the verge of an historic season and therefore the video services were upgraded to match the performances on the pitch. All matches were filmed with 2 cameras both on the gantry, the pictures were mixed live and transmitted to the few TV's throughout Burnden Park.

The number of compilation videos also increased as Bolton swept aside team after team. The Championship season was comprehensively covered by 4 compilation volumes, a total of 5 videos. Bolton and Touchline TV produced a box set of all the compilations at the end of season as a collectors item covering the complete record breaking season. Two of the best selling match videos from that season were the wins against Spurs and Wolves both of which sold hundreds of copies.

During early 1996 Touchline TV was commissioned by Bolton to produce an historical documentary of the 102 years at Burnden. The result was a 90 minute programme entitled 'End of an Era - The Final Whistle'. The programme was hosted by Ken Wolstenholme MBE, a lifelong fan of Bolton Wanderers. As Ken is followed on his last tour of the ground we relive moments for the previous 102 years, including an interview with a man who was born in the same year as Burnden Park was opened. This much acclaimed video was complimented by an in-depth programme covering the final match against Charlton and includes the fans feelings as they watch Bolton play at Burnden for the last time. Both videos were supplied as a set and provide a lasting reminder of Burnden Park.

With Boltons move to the stunning new Reebok Stadium, once again the facilities provided by Touchline TV were improved to match the state of art stadium. Touchline TV created a digital control room within the stadium. This room is the heart of the match-day entertainment. Starting approximately 1½ hours before kick-off the Wanderers TV station goes 'on-air'. A TV magazine programme is then broadcast to 150+ TV's throughout the stadium. This programme is produced 12 hours before kick-off to ensure it includes ALL the up-to-date news from behind-the-scenes. The programme includes interviews with the manager and players and includes highlights from previous games, both home and away. Approximately 1/2 an hour before kick-off the large screen within the stadium is also used to show the magazine programme. The technology supporting the large screen is incredible. Four powerful computers are used exclusively to control the screen, providing instant replays and team information. As kick-off approaches, the five permanent cameras which film the match come to life.

The match is filmed from 2 cameras on the gantry (one of the highest in the league) 1 at the side of the dug-out, 1 at high level behind the south goal and one at pitch level behind the North goal. Each cameraman is in communication with the match Director in the control room.

The Director instructs each cameraman what to film and views their pictures on an array of monitors. The 2 cameras behind the goals are used exclusively for replays to provide different angles on the action as the match is filmed, the pictures are mixed live and commentary is added live. The commentator also has a monitor so he can comment on the replays. The match is broadcast to all the stadium TV's and interesting replays are shown on the large screen. These replays can only be shown when the ball is out of play. Two master videos are produced during the match, one is sent to BBC and BskyB and the other is used to produce match videos for sale in the Club Shops.

The Wanderers TV station is one of the most advanced in the league and places Bolton in an ideal position to take advantage of future developments in the area of football TV coverage.

Sponsorship and advertising opportunities are available on both Wanderers TV and the large Videoscreen to companies wishing to take advantage of these powerful promotional mediums.



*Photo: Ian Lawson
Instant replays are shown on the large 7m x 5m video screen.*

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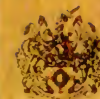
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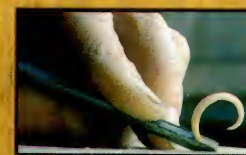
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Tours at the Reebok

Tom Hall
Visitor Centre Manager
BWFC

The Visitor Centre

From the day the Visitors Centre opened in December 1996 fans have flocked to the Reebok. Unfortunately, it wasn't possible during the construction period to let anyone into the building area for safety reasons but now that the Stadium is completed and fully operational many individuals and organisations are keen to look around the new Stadium.

The dressing rooms and run-out tunnels are always particular favourites. New facilities for the 1990's often raise an eyebrow such as 'kick about areas built within the dressing rooms', 'female officials changing room', 'drugs testing room'.

Tours are available most days except matchdays. Minimum numbers in a party are 10 people, maximum 50. Individuals or smaller groups can join other parties to make up numbers providing the time the tour has been booked by the larger party is convenient to them.

Stadium tours start from the Club Shop. During 1998 it is hoped to complete the new Visitor Centre, which will become the focal point and home for the Stadium tours.

If you wish to book a tour of the Stadium please contact the Club Shop (Tel: 01204 673650).



The Football Trust

One point of interest whilst on the tour of the Stadium is the brass plaque acknowledging the involvement of the Football Trust. The Football Trust has been providing support for the game at every level throughout the UK for over 23 years, and since 1988 has been helping clubs implement the recommendations of the Taylor Report. The governments commitment to the Football Trust has the support of everyone who cares about the National game. The Trust hand out around £40 million each year to help football clubs re-develop their existing ground or relocate to a new site. A grant of over £3 million from the Football Trust became a vital ingredient to ensure the Reebok Stadiums achievability.

The photograph shows Chairman, Gordon Hargreaves with Labour M.P. and Bolton Wanderers fan Ann Taylor leader of the House of Commons and Deputy Chairman of the Football Trust, Richard Faulkner.



The Official Opening Ceremony

Another point of interest is the brass plaque in main reception. The Reebok Stadium officially opened on 10th January 1998 by the Deputy Prime Minister, the Right Honourable John Prescott, prior to the Premier League game against Southampton. Mr Prescott was welcomed to the Stadium by Wanderers' President, Nat Lofthouse OBE, Club Chairman Gordon Hargreaves and Chief Executive Des McBain before being invited to unveil a commemorative plaque in the ground floor reception area.

He then joined invited guests and civic dignitaries in the Chairman's Suite for lunch where he responded to a vote of thanks proposed by Club Director Graham Ball.

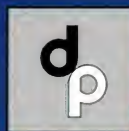
Immediately before kick off, Mr Prescott acknowledged the reception from 23,333 fans as he was introduced to both teams and the match officials.

The picture above shows the welcoming party applauding Mr Prescott following the official unveiling.



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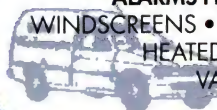
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Reebok Stadium

Bolton Wanderers Football Club

Honours

FA Cup Winners 1923, 1926, 1929, 1958
FA Cup Runners Up 1894, 1904, 1953
League Cup Runners Up 1995
Division One Champions 1997
Division Two Champions 1909, 1978
Division Three Champions 1973
Sherpa Van Trophy Winners 1989
Freight Rover Trophy Runners Up 1986
FA Charity Shield Winners 1958
Lancashire Cup Winners 1886, 1891, 1912, 1922, 1925, 1927, 1932, 1934, 1948, 1988, 1990
Central League Champions 1955, 1995

Record Appearances

Eddie Hopkinson, 578 (1956-69)

Record Goalscorer

Nat Lofthouse, 285 (1945-1960)

Record Goals in a Season

Joe Smith, 38 (1920-21)

Record Goals in a Match

Jim Cassidy, 5 (13-0) v Sheffield United, FA Cup 1/2/1890

Tony Caldwell, 5 (8-1) v Walsall, Division Three 10/9/1983

Record Home Win

13-0 Sheffield United, (FA Cup 2nd Round) 1/2/1890

Record Away Win

7-1 v Aston Villa, (Division One) 6/12/1914

Best League Performance

3rd Division One 1892, 1921, 1925

Most Capped Player

Nat Lofthouse, England (33)

Record Fee Paid

£3.5 million Dean Holdsworth from Wimbledon, October 1997

Record Attendance

69,912 v Manchester City, (FA Cup 5th Round) 18/2/1933

Record Receipts

(Burden Park), £202,031 v Tottenham, (Coca Cola Cup) 27/11/1996

Professional Team

Client: Bolton Wanderers Football Club
Bankers: Co-operative Bank, Specialised Finance
Financial Advisers: Solomon Hare, Corporate Finance
Architects: LOBB Sports Architecture, London
Main Contractor: Birse Construction Company Limited
Steelwork: Watson Steel Limited, Bolton
Structural Engineers: Deakin Callard & Partners
M & E Design: W.E. Hannan & Associates
Fire Strategy: Warrington Fire Research Institute
Civil Engineering: Alfred McAlpine C.E.
Mechanical: Ellesmere Engineering
Precast Concrete: Bison Concrete
Roofing: Hathaway Roofing
Electrical: Piggott and Whitfield
Pitch Design: J. Mallinson, Ormskirk
Internal Glazing: S. G. Aluminium
Seats: Metalliform
Roadworks and Car Parks: Alfred McAlpine Building North
P.A./C.C.T.V.: Romers

Bolton Wanderers Football Club Project Team

Gordon Hargreaves: Chairman, Bolton Wanderers F.C.
Graham Ball: Project Director, Bolton Wanderers F.C.
Des McBain: Chief Executive, Bolton Wanderers F.C.
Paul Fletcher: Chief Executive, Reebok Stadium
Jan Kozlowski: Project Manager
O'Neil and Partners: Quantity Surveyors
Phil Hampson: Resident Engineer
Nigel Ball: Marketing Manager
Richard Norton: Groundsman
Tom Hall: Visitor Centre Manager
Chris Tofalos: Bolton Wanderers F.C. Photographer
John Walsh OBE: Transport Consultant
Andrew Hobson: Design Consultant

Bolton Wanderers Football Club

President - Nat Lofthouse O.B.E.
Chairman - G. Hargreaves
Directors - G. Ball, G. Seymour, G. Warburton, W.B. Warburton
P.A. Gartside, B. Scowcroft
Vice Presidents - G.E. Ashworth, T. Edge, J. Lightbown, H.D. Warburton
Honorary Vice Presidents - D. Singleton, F. Smith JP
Manager - Colin Todd
Chief Executive/Secretary Football: Des McBain
Chief Executive - Reebok Stadium: Paul Fletcher
Club Accountant & Historian - Simon Marland

Commercial Manager, Terry Holland: 01204 673777
Match Sponsorships, Perimeter and Programme Advertising

Lottery Goldline Manager, Andrew Dean: 01204 673722

Marketing Manager, Nigel Ball: 01204 673750
Membership Enquiries, Corporate Matchday Tables,
Hospitality Box Enquiries, Exhibition Centre Enquiries

Reebok Shop Enquiries

Chris Ball, Shop Manager: 01204 673650

All Media Information

Alan Fullelove, Public Relations: 01204 673673

All Ticket Enquiries:

01204 673610
Graham Holliday, Ticket Office Manager

Conference and Banqueting

Gary Atkinson, General Manager, Ring and Brymer
All Conference, Banqueting, Seminars, Weddings, Functions etc:
01204 673720.

General Enquiries

Bolton Wanderers Football Club: 01204 673673

General Enquiries

Reebok Stadium: 01204 673750



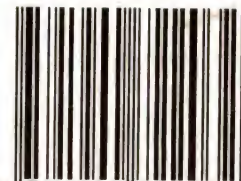


Where did it all begin?

Photograph by kind permission of Stuart Clarke, Home of Football, Ambleside

The Road to Rome

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